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Foreword

By W. ARNDT

As the old year departs and 1949 enters, we lift up our eyes to the hills whence cometh our help. It seems doubtful that the world situation will improve materially during the twelve months that lie ahead; that the war clouds which still cast their gloom over the globe will be dispersed; that true peace will again unite the nations in amity and concord; that the state of virtual slavery, the horrible privations and destitution which crush vast multitudes in Europe and Asia will be ended; and that we can again eat our meals without thinking with a start of the starving, helpless, displaced persons roaming about by the millions in areas where they are not wanted. Nor does there appear to exist a sound basis for the hope that a moral reformation will set in now that another series of large religious gatherings has been held; that purity and decency will become the watchword of our country's population; and that the crime waves will lose their frightening extent and power. But we know that the destinies of the nations as well as those of all individuals are in the hands of the Keeper of Israel, who neither slumbers nor sleeps and who has given us the promise that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. In His name we cross the threshold of the new year, trusting that His power will avert whatever is inimical to our highest interests.

If anybody inquires what the flag is under which our journal intends to serve during the next twelve months, the answer is that there has been no change, that the banner is the same which our Synod has flown since its founding in

1847, that it simply is that of loyalty to the Lutheran Confessions. That this is the course to which we again commit ourselves is forsooth not news; it would be news if the announcement were made here that strict confessional loyalty is henceforth to be discarded by this journal. In the past the charge raised against us hardly ever was that of lack of faithfulness to what the Lutheran Confessions teach; usually we were accused of manifesting a fanatical excess of such faithfulness.

It is easy to imagine somebody rising and asserting that there is a whole score of reasons why this attitude of loyalty to the Lutheran Confessions should be dropped. Think of it, we can fancy him saying — this is A. D. 1949. The Confessions were written in the sixteenth century. What old documents they are! How can such declarations, hoary with age, be normative for us twentieth-century folk! But certainly no one of us need be impressed by such an argument. The poetry of Homer, Shakespeare, and Milton is old; that does not deprive it of excellence. The hollowness of this charge is so patent that it requires no long refutation.

More serious might appear the objection that the Confessions are cast into the thought patterns that were in vogue four hundred years ago, that the style employed is no longer used these days, and that our modern age, accustomed to terse, crisp speech, cannot find satisfaction and proper instruction in these antiquated presentations. This complaint is only partly justified. These old documents, it is true, bear the imprint of the age in which they were produced. But the teachings which they embody are set forth with crystal clearness, and the style frequently, as, for instance, in the Augsburg Confession and in Luther's Small Catechism, is remarkable for classical simplicity and forcefulness.

By and by we can visualize our imaginary critic moving to higher and more important ground. The Confessions do not deal with the issues of the day, is the charge. They were written to cope with problems that were acute four centuries ago, but which now are as dead as the Holy Roman Empire that was ruled over by Charles V. Many sociological difficulties confront us which were entirely unknown to Luther and Melancthon and the authors of the Formula of Concord; how can their declarations, be the content ever so noble and

edifying, serve us in our perplexities! This, it must be admitted, is a serious accusation. If it is valid, we had better consign the Confessions to the scrap heap and try to draw up new ones that are more adequate. But let the old documents be examined. What they deal with is, to begin with, the great question how we sinners may obtain the forgiveness of our God and Creator. The answer is, through faith in the work of Christ, the Son of God, who bore our sins. There is no more important question that can arise at any time. It is this fundamental issue which is, as it were, the leit-motif of all our confessional writings, and it is as alive in the twentieth century as in the sixteenth or in the first. Let the other subjects dwelt on in the confessional writings be scrutinized. What are they? Chiefly, in addition to the Gospel message just mentioned, the Law, sin and grace, the person of Christ, the means of grace, in which God's pardon is brought to us, the Church, conversion and sanctification, the predestination of God's children, Christ's second coming, and the Judgment. Are these vital issues? There are not any that are more important and significant. As for the sociological and economic problems on which the critic says the Confessions are silent, he will find, if he looks, that the proper principles have been enunciated. Special theories, it is true, are not included. However, that is not a defect, but rather one of the excellencies of the Confessions. They can serve us at a date so remote from the time of their origin because they deal not with detailed and ephemeral theories and suggestions, but with fundamental principles whose correctness and applicability do not wane with the passing of the centuries.

In a summarizing way one may state that our Confessions proclaim the three Reformation *solas* and that in them one finds the only answer to modern man's spiritual problems: *Sola Scriptura, sola gratia, sola fide*. Can our age, or any age, present a better foundation?

But we can see the critic preparing to state a still more serious objection. Some things which the Confessions teach are not true, he avers. Pressed to give particulars, he will reveal himself as a thoroughgoing rationalist who rejects whatever is not in keeping with his own reason, observation, and experience. The Confessions demand acceptance of the

teachings concerning the Trinity, the two natures of Christ, baptismal regeneration, the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper, and similar matters, and all these things are incredible, says he. Yes, we admit the Confessions teach these doctrines. If the yardstick of human reason is employed, then the old confessional writings have to be opposed. But God be praised! there is a better, safer, more dependable means of judging whether these teachings are true or not, and that is the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures. God Himself has told us what is true in the realm of the relations between Him and mankind, transgressions and pardon, death and life, hell and heaven. There is no higher tribunal to which we can go than the Holy Scriptures. Let the Confessions be judged by them. If their teachings fail to receive the endorsement of this Judge, they must at once be thrown to the winds. But we are not at all afraid that the verdict of this Judge will be negative. For about four centuries the Confessions have been tested by critics and scholars of every school and type, we ourselves have tested them, and no one has been able to point out one doctrinal error in them. It is true that not all exegetical processes in them can be approved, that not all historical or critical statements they make are tenable, but the doctrines set forth there are those of the Scriptures themselves. We defy the critic to show that in any point of doctrine the Confessions have forsaken the solid foundation of the Apostles and Prophets.

The imaginary critic will probably exclaim that even if we endorse everything else in the symbolical books, we certainly cannot approve of their *damnamus secus docentes*. We are told that the confessional writings are intolerant, too positive, too insistent on the correctness of what they declare. Our reply is that the objection must be overruled and that the *damnamus* statement is justified. It is well known, of course, that this condemnatory judgment does not mean that those who teach differently are consigned to eternal torment, but merely that their position is rejected. *Damnare* here does not refer to anybody's eternal fate, but to his position as a teacher of Scripture doctrine. Nevertheless the judgment expressed may seem severe. Yes, it is severe; but is it *too* severe? May deviation from the divine norm of the truth be treated as a matter of indifference? Must error not be labeled as what

it is? Have we the right to see any part of the divine Word, even if it should be a short sentence or a single expression, trampled under foot? Must we not stand in awe of the majesty of the great God speaking to us in the Scriptures? We cannot take a different course, we simply have to reject the position of those who teach differently from the Scriptures. The words of the Son of God ring in our ears: "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5: 18 f.

But, says our critic, are not the Lutheran Confessions division-making? Will insistence on them not promote rather than reduce sectarianism? We reply that whoever takes such a view does not understand the nature of our Confessions. Let us here think especially of the chief one of our symbolical writings, the Augsburg Confession. Among Lutherans the Augustana is the symbol to which all subscribe. In addition we can say that this confessional writing, in its first seventeen articles, brilliantly and yet in simple fashion sets forth the great Christ-centered teachings of the Holy Scriptures on which our holy Christian faith is based. Here we are not dealing with a divisive document, but one that is truly constructive and unifying.

The quiver of the critic is not yet empty; he fires one more dart as we face him. Not the Confessions, but the Bible should be our norm, he says. You are lifting human writings to a rank which must be occupied by no authority except the divine Scriptures. This sounds formidable, but when it is closely examined it shrinks into nothingness. Of course, the Bible is our norm, our guide, our judge, and the Bible alone. The *sola Scriptura* principle has our unequivocal endorsement. The Confessions, we emphasize, play an altogether different role from the Scriptures. They are witnesses. They show the world what we Lutherans believe the Bible teaches on the great issues of our existence and our relations to God and our fellow men. They may be called our response, the response of our Church, to the proclamation of the divinely

inspired penmen writing in the Scriptures. When we say that we have put on our banner the words "loyalty to the Lutheran Confessions," this does not mean that we look upon the Symbolical Books as the source of our doctrine, or as the oracle whose voice we obey. We do not obey the Lutheran Confessions, strictly speaking. They are not our master. They are our mouthpiece through which in a simple and effective way we announce our religious convictions to our fellow men. Why do we sign the Augsburg Confession? Not because we entertain the erroneous thought that Melancthon, who wrote it, was inspired and that it is an infallible document. No, we sign it because we find it to be a declaration which expresses precisely the beliefs which we cherish, holding that it represents the teachings of the divine Word.

Confidently, joyously, then, we shall begin the cruise under the good flag of the Lutheran Confessions. By being faithful to them we are certain we are faithful to the Scriptures and to the message of salvation through the blood of Christ, our Lord.



Comfort and Encouragement

Which a Pastor May Derive from the Doctrine of Election

By VICTOR MENNICKE

When we speak of our eternal election or predestination, we are dealing with a clearly revealed doctrine of Holy Scriptures. For this reason we confess in the Formula of Concord (Ep. XI, 5): "This (predestination of God) is not to be investigated in the secret counsel of God, but to be sought in the Word of God, where it is also revealed." "It . . . must be learned from the Holy Gospel" (Ep., XI, 9).

Holy Scriptures teach that our election is "the eternal purpose and decree of God to do what He actually does for us in time; converting, justifying, preserving, and glorifying us" (*Popular Symbolics*, p. 124). "Our election is founded . . . alone upon the merit of Christ and the gracious will of His Father" (F. C., Th. D., XI, 75). "This eternal election is an efficient cause and immovable foundation of our salvation and of everything pertaining thereto, including faith" (F. C., Th. D., XI, 8).

The purpose of the teaching of election is our "glorious consolation." In particular, the doctrine of election affords the consolation and the assurance that we shall finally be saved despite the devil, the world, and our flesh. In affliction, predestination affords the special comfort that God does not merely supply the power for our perseverance, but actually keeps us unto salvation. Predestination also guarantees that the Church shall finally prevail against the portals of hell (cf. F. C., Th. D., XI, 45—50). This comfort is for *every* Christian.

Our present topic, however, is concerned with the comfort and encouragement a pastor *as pastor* may receive from the Scriptural doctrine of election. In treating this topic we shall refer to specific Scripture passages and apply them.

Outstanding is the use of the word "elect" — ἐκλεκτοί, with that of its synonyms προεγνωσμένοι and προωρισμένοι. The meaning of the word is simple. It denotes those whom the Lord has chosen, elected, out of the *massa perditā* "to be members of His family or Kingdom" (Hodge). John 15:19 Christ says: ἐγὼ ἐξελεξάμην ὑμᾶς ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου. Now as to its use.

In the congregation at Colossae were people who were practicing false asceticism (Col. 2:16, 21, 23). There were even those who were tainted with false doctrines, e. g., philosophical speculations tending toward gnosticism (2:8), and the spiritistic leanings (2:18, 21); and yet, when the Apostle spoke to them, what a wonderful name he gave them: ἐκλεκτοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ! Yes, Paul realized that they were sinners, and yet, when he had to deal with them, they were the "elect of God." Many of us will undoubtedly have problem cases in our congregations. There are the overdeveloped pietists on the one side; the extremists of personal freedom on the other. Unscriptural opinions will ever be present. We are in danger of viewing our members particularly as suffering from these weaknesses. How easy to classify them as the ignoramuses, blockheads, weaklings, people with screwy minds, etc. The Apostle had just such people in his congregation, yet to him they were "elect of God." Unless we have definite proof that a member of our congregation is "a heathen man and a publican" who must be excommunicated from our church, we are to treat him as an "elect of God" in spite of his shortcomings. When we truly realize that our members are "elect of God," persons whom God from all eternity has foreordained to be His own, and in time called them by His Gospel and preserved them as His own and will glorify them with us in heaven, they will not so much be the thorns in the flesh we like to view them. A new zeal will overtake us to work for them, on them, and with them.

In his doxology 2 Thess. 2:13 the Apostle Paul says of the Thessalonians εἰλατο ὑμᾶς ὁ θεός — God chose you. These are words given by inspiration. Now, the congregation was not only disturbed by eschatological aberrations, but moral deficiencies were prominent in congregational life (1 Thess. 5:13-14; 4:1-7). Yet the Apostle, while correcting the members of the congregation, says that they were chosen by God. Inasmuch as they accepted the preaching of the Gospel, and professed faith in their Savior, the Apostle regards them as elect and deals with them as such. May we do likewise.

As we turn to Titus 1:1, we find the Apostle's direction for pastoral work. He calls himself "an Apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect," κατὰ πίστιν ἐκλεκτῶν θεοῦ. "Κατά," says the old commentator Scultetus,

"hic finem notat." Thus Paul considered himself an Apostle *with respect to the faith* of those whom God had chosen, or *in order* that they might be led to believe the Gospel. God had chosen them to salvation *through faith* (Walther: *Be-richtigung*, p. 147). Inasmuch as God had, from eternity, decreed to save His elect *through faith*, the Apostle views his task as preaching the Gospel through which the Holy Ghost would work this faith. Thus he was an Apostle according to, or for the sake of, the faith of God's elect. Paul did not regard his calling as a job of preaching so many sermons and turning out a certain amount of routine work. His was the joy of being a co-worker with Christ. Christ had wrought the atonement. Paul preached the atonement, and the Holy Spirit through this preaching worked the faith. This work made Paul an "Apostle according to the faith of God's elect." In this respect we stand on the same plane with Paul. God has chosen elect to salvation through faith which the Holy Spirit works through that Gospel which you and I preach, as co-workers with Christ! It was in this sense that Paul wrote to Timothy (2 Tim. 2:10): "I endure all things for the *elect's* sakes, that they may also obtain salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

These same thoughts the Lord expressed in the tenth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, where He discoursed on the "Good Shepherd"; especially in v. 16, where He says: "and other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." Dr. Stoeckhardt remarked (*Bibl. Geschichte des N. T.*, p. 174): "The other sheep, who are not of this fold, not of (the house of) Israel, are those who should come out of the Gentile world. Those Gentiles which He had in mind He regards as His sheep even before they come to Him, while they still are going astray. They are His sheep, belong to Him according to God's foreseeing and decree. These words show us that throughout this entire passage the Lord speaks of His elect children. Those whom God from the beginning had chosen to eternal life and had handed over to His Son, and who in (this) life had come to faith, are the sheep of Jesus. That Christ gives His life for just these sheep, does not exclude the fact that He is the Propitiation for the sin of the whole world. The re-

demption through Christ reaches its final purpose and object in the elect who are finally saved. The sheep which are not of this fold, the elect out of all people and nations, Jesus, the Shepherd, 'brings' through the service of His disciples, His preachers; He calls, converts them through His Gospel, and the elect children hear His voice and recognize Him as their Shepherd and Redeemer."

As we view our pastoral work in our congregations, we may well consider the doctrine of election, which definitely includes that the Lord has chosen the elect in our congregations to come to faith or be strengthened in their faith through our preaching of the Gospel. What dignity this adds to our work! What encouragement to continue our work cheerfully! Such consideration of the doctrine of election is the proper method, as the Formula of Concord says (Sol. Decl., XI, 33): "With this *revealed* will of God we should concern ourselves, follow and be diligently engaged upon it, because through the Word, whereby He calls us, the Holy Ghost bestows grace, power, and ability to this end."

One of the most famous passages on election is found in Romans 8, beginning with the words of v. 28. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate," etc. Dr. Stoekhardt has summed up the answer as to who the "called" are by saying (*Roemerbrief*, p. 390) "κλητοί ist bei Paulus, ueberhaupt in den apostolischen Briefen, durchweg Praedikat der glaeubigen Christen, gleichwie dieselben anderwaerts — εκλεκτοί genannt werden." Briefly the argument is as follows: All things work together for good to God's elect. All things — this includes even the unpleasant situations and the unwelcome happenings. The truth expressed in these words again places the pastor's work upon an entirely different plane from every other profession. Persons engaged in other professions must always operate with the danger of defeat. As loyal Americans we are desirous of having our country emerge victoriously out of every conflict, yet our statesmen and the officers of our armed forces must ever reckon with the possibility of defeat. Many a competent naval architect has designed majestic ships only to have them sent beneath the waves. Firemen are possibly fighting the flames. Not all things work out together

for the good of their task. A shift in the wind's direction may make a major conflagration out of a little fire. In this manner every mundane profession must face the danger of failure due to circumstances. How entirely different the work of the pastor! Even the most untoward conditions cannot prevent a desirable consummation of his work. We mention war, persecution, plague, and famine. Yes, they may disrupt the organization of the local congregation; they may expose unsuspected hypocrites; they may even crucify the pastor on his own altar, as was the fate of the Lutheran Estonians at the hands of the "Red hordes"; but defeat of his work, never! When the Lord from eternity chose in Christ those elect to whom we preach the Gospel, He took into account even the severest exigencies to which they would be exposed and so decreed that no one and nothing should take them out of His hand. Our preaching the Gospel to them is not in vain. Since God has decreed that all things must work together for good to His elect, our work is bound to succeed, not only in spite of, but even as a result of, all things that happen to the elect.

Another aspect of the doctrine of election bears out this same ultimate success of our pastoral work. In 1 Peter 1:2 we read: "Peter, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to the . . . elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." To this passage Luther remarks: "Daraus sollen wir kurz diese Lehre nehmen, dass die Vernehmung . . . in Gottes Hand steht . . . und auf seine Barmherzigkeit, die unwandelbar und ewig ist . . . gegruendet; daher sie auch Gottes Vernehmung heisst und derhalben gewiss ist und nicht fehlen kann." We are dealing with assured success. The elect under our care have from all eternity been marked off and have been begotten in love by God the Father, and sanctified by the Spirit within the bounds of time "unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." A firmer assurance does not exist. Accordingly, there is only one attitude, which we, the mouthpieces of the Holy Spirit, can take regarding our pastoral work — forward in joy and courage.

The Scriptural end and aim of election gives us comfort and encouragement in our work as pastors. God has chosen His elect "to be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Eph. 1:9), "unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ," "to the praise of the glory of His grace" (Eph. 1:6). In 2 Thess.

2:13 we read that God chose His elect "to salvation." In the Book of Acts 13:48 we are told that they are ordained to eternal life. Accordingly, the Formula of Concord, Sol. Decl., XI, 14, states: "The entire doctrine concerning the purpose, counsel, will, and ordination of God pertaining to our redemption, call, justification, and salvation should be taken together." When we deal with our parishioners, thanks to the doctrine of election, we present to them the redemption through Christ, the conversion and sanctification by the Holy Spirit, and also the final preservation. We can go all the way and tell them, inasmuch as the Lord has brought them to faith through the Gospel, they hereby also have the assurance that He has predestinated them unto eternal life. Especially when they are in doubt about their soul's salvation, we may use this doctrine to good advantage, as did John Staupitz with his parishioner young Martin Luther. Luther later wrote (St. Louis Ed., II:180) that he certainly would have died of doubt and fear had he not received this comfort. That comfort we may bring to our members by applying this doctrine to them. How this lightens our task and cheers us in our work!

In conclusion, let us recall that when the Apostle Peter had addressed the believers in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia as *ἐκλεκτοί*, he exclaimed: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The truth that these people with whom he had to deal were *ἐκλεκτοί*, with all this term implies, was so wonderful that he could not consider this fact without expressing a doxology. Similarly the Apostle Paul, before presenting the doctrine of election, writes to his congregation at Ephesus: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ." And again, after the longer dissertation on election in the Epistle to the Romans, the Apostle Paul breaks forth in the well-known hymn of praise: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! . . . To whom be glory forever. Amen." May the same enthusiasm and joy which filled the hearts of the Apostles as they contemplated the doctrine of election and what it meant to them, be granted unto us.

Sheboygan, Wis.

The Forgotten Epistle

By OTTO E. SOHN

The Epistle to Philemon may fitly be called one of the forgotten books of the New Testament. Along with 2 and 3 John it has received but little attention in our synodical literature. And is there anyone among us who has ever preached a sermon on it or on a portion of it?

We can in a measure understand this neglect. Strictly speaking, this epistle is not a historical, doctrinal, hortatory, or prophetic book of general interest, but a private letter to an otherwise unknown individual, in which the writer, the Apostle Paul, reveals himself as a true friend, intercessor, and psychologist as well as a man of sterling character and unimpeachable integrity. And while numerous practical lessons may be drawn from it, none of its twenty-five verses is so constituted as to lend itself readily for use as an independent sermon text; which explains sufficiently the silence that exists in our literature concerning it.

Yet in spite of this peculiar character, it is a book which may be studied with great profit, not only because it is part of the inspired Word of God, which was given to us for our learning, but also because it presents to us such a goodly measure of applied Christianity. C. S. Lewis, in the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, calls it "the most beautiful and intensely human of all St. Paul's epistles, full of charm and beauty." Coleridge, quoted in *Lehre und Wehre* (March, 1923), designates it "the most gentlemanly letter ever written." Bishop Lightfoot (*loc. cit.*) said: "As an expression of simple dignity, of refined courtesy, of large sympathy, and of warm personal affection the Epistle to Philemon stands unrivaled." And the French theologian Sabatier: "We have here only a few familiar lines, but so full of grace, of salt, of serious and trustful affection, that this short epistle gleams like a pearl of the most exquisite purity in the rich treasure of the New Testament," (*loc. cit.*). Dr. L. Fuerbringer, in his well-known *Introduction to the New Testament*, describes it as "a small, tender, and warm writing of inimitable originality which despite brotherly humility and love reveals true apostolic dignity in language and content."

The great Reformer, in his preface to the letter, beautifully summarizes and describes it as follows: "This epistle

reveals a masterful, lovely example of Christian love. For we see there how St. Paul concerns himself about poor Onesimus and sides with him against his master with all that is in him and acts as though he himself were Onesimus, who had sinned. Still he does not do it with force or coercion, as would probably be within his rights, but he waives his right and thereby compels Philemon to forego the use of his right also. Even as Christ did for us over against God the Father, so Paul here does on behalf of Onesimus over against Philemon. For Christ also gave up His rights and conquered the Father with love and humility, so that He had to lay aside His wrath and right and receive us into grace, for Christ's sake, who so earnestly takes our part and is deeply concerned about us. For we are all His Onesimi, if we believe it." (Martin Luther, Holman edition, Vol. VI.)

AUTHOR AND AUTHENTICITY

We need not search long for the identity of the writer, for he begins with his name. It is Paul, the great missionary of the first century, then languishing in prison for the Gospel's sake. He repeats the name in v. 19. Since there are no variant readings in which the name is omitted, every true Bible Christian will concede that the Pauline authorship of the letter is fixed beyond dispute. Whether it belongs into the New Testament canon, inasmuch as it is a private letter, is another question. But it is a question which has been settled long ago.

There have indeed been a few scattered objections to the authenticity of the letter. In the fourth and fifth centuries it was opposed as being unworthy of Paul's mind and as of no value for edification. Later on it was attacked by Baur, who styled it "an embryo of a Christian novel" and who, according to the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, was inspired by his desire to break down its corroborative value to the other captivity letters (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians). Holtzmann suggested that it was interpolated, Weizsaecker considered it either allegorical or as being based on the letter of Pliny to Sabianus. But, according to Zahn, these are nothing but interesting examples of the vagaries of their authors and deserve only to be mentioned, nothing more. Not only are style, language, and argument clearly Pauline,

but also Eusebius, III, 25, states that all the letters of Paul were generally accepted as part of the canon at his time. While, to be sure, he does not mention this epistle by name among the *homologoumena*, he does omit it in the catalog of *antilegomena*, which clearly shows that the Christians of his day were agreed on the authenticity of this book.

THE ADDRESSEE

As with respect to the author, so there can be no doubt as to the identity of the recipient of this epistle. Verse 1 reveals him as having been a certain Philemon, whom Paul further characterizes as the beloved and as a co-worker in the Lord's kingdom. True, several other names are mentioned, namely, Apphia and Archippus, also the church that was in Philemon's house, but it is only the apostolic greeting which was meant for them. The letter itself is directed to Philemon personally. From the Apostle's remark in v. 19 that Philemon owed himself to Paul, we conclude that he was an adult convert brought into the Kingdom directly by the Apostle, though not at Colossae, where Philemon was now living. Paul's remarks in Col. 1:4, 7-9, and especially 2:1, seem to indicate that up to this time he had not been in that city. As for Philemon, he was apparently a man of considerable means who owned one or more slaves and was an example of Christian consecration (v. 1, fellow laborer) and kindness (v. 5) and of quite some importance to the church. For he placed his house at the disposal of the Colossian church for public worship, either the entire group of Christians in that area or a section of it in his own immediate neighborhood. Last, but not least, there existed a warm and intimate bond of friendship between Philemon and Paul; else the latter could not have written as he did. Tradition adds that he was the bishop of Colossae, and the Greek martyrology for November 22 tells us that he, together with his wife and son and slave Onesimus, were martyred by stoning before Androcles, the governor, in the days of Nero. With this the Latin martyrology agrees. Tradition also adds that Archippus, whom Paul called his fellow soldier and who must therefore have manifested considerable activity in behalf of the Gospel, was originally one of the 70 disciples and later became the bishop of Laodicea. But we refrain from the attempt to verify these claims.

PLACE AND DATE OF WRITING

Perhaps the majority of commentators leans to the view that St. Paul penned this cordial missive in Rome, about 59 or 60 A. D., at the time of his first imprisonment, from which he hoped soon to be released (v. 22). Others transfer the scene to Caesarea, where he was imprisoned for some time prior to the voyage to Rome. In recent times the view has also been expressed that Paul may have written it in Ephesus, which was about 100 miles west of Colossae, where he had spent considerable time and where he may have suffered imprisonment, as his references to frequent imprisonments, 2 Cor. 6:5 and 11:23, and to "fighting with beasts at Ephesus," 1 Cor. 15:32, seem to indicate. Since the identity of the place has no bearing whatever on the subject matter, we proceed now to the study of the letter itself, and on the basis of the following outline:

- I. The Address and Apostolic Greeting, vv. 1-3
- II. Paul's Joy over Philemon's Exemplary Spiritual State, vv. 4-7
- III. Paul's Plea to Philemon on Behalf of Onesimus, vv. 8-21
- IV. Personal Remarks, Greetings, and Benediction, vv. 22-25

I. *Introduction*

"Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy, our brother, unto Philemon, our dearly beloved and fellow laborer, and to our beloved Apphia and Archippus, our fellow soldier, and to the church in thy house: Grace to you, and peace, from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ," vv. 1-3. The Apostle begins the letter with his own name. This was not a display of vain egoism on his part, but was done in strict conformity with the epistolary usage of the times. Cf. Acts 23:26: "Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix." It is worthy of note that he does not introduce himself with the usual title of Apostle, as in most of his letters, but calls himself a prisoner who lay in bonds, not because of any infraction of Roman law, nor of any other law, but for the Gospel's sake. He was the prisoner of Jesus Christ and was suffering this injustice for righteousness' sake. The very fact that he states this situation so nonchalantly makes it

evident that he is not resentful nor sullen because of this ill fortune, but rather, like Peter, considers it an honor for which he should glorify God, 1 Pet. 4:14-16. As verse 19 indicates, he was hopeful of his early release from this confinement.

Paul's associate at the time of writing was young Timothy; not as co-author, but as faithful companion and spiritual brother. Many years before, the Apostle had found him in the little town of Lystra, in Galatia, and had recognized his abilities, induced him to come with him into the service of the Lord, and by faithful instruction fitted him to become a valiant ambassador of Jesus Christ to a fallen world. At the close of the letter, in verse 23, Paul mentions several others who were with him at that time, namely, Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke.

Next, the Apostle states the name of the addressee, Philemon, whom he further calls the beloved and the co-worker. There was a firm bond of Christian love that existed between the two, though they must have been separated for quite some time. It is but natural that we pastors are drawn close to those whom by the grace of God we were permitted to bring to the knowledge of the truth, especially if these new converts prove themselves grateful by conscientious devotion to the cause of Christ. That Paul called Philemon his co-worker does not permit us to conclude that he was the bishop at Colossae, as tradition has it, unless the step into the holy ministry came later. This term is much too general and justifies only the assumption that he took an active part in the work of the church. For the same term is applied to Aquila and Priscilla, Rom. 16:3; to Urbanus, Rom. 16:9; to Timothy, Rom. 16:21; and to Epaphroditus, Phil. 2:2, 5. It points to consecrated activity rather than an office. Philemon seems to have been a man of considerable means, well able to own and maintain slaves. It is always a source of Christian satisfaction when one is able to draw into the fold of Christ those who according to human standards are wise and well-to-do and mighty. A true pastor will of course be happy over the accession of even the poorest pauper and treat him just as cordially as he treats those who have been blessed with great bounty. Yet, since Christ Himself refers to the greater difficulty of the rich man so far as the entrance into the Kingdom is concerned, it seems a greater victory when by the

power of God's Holy Spirit we are able to persuade the high and mighty of this world to kneel before the Cross of Christ in sincere repentance and faith.

As far as Apphia, who is also called "the sister," is concerned, it is most natural to assume that she was Philemon's wife and therefore a sister in the faith. Likewise the assumption is justified that Archippus was their son and that he is to be identified with the Archippus mentioned in Col. 4:17, who apparently held some type of church office at Colossae, the nature of which, however, cannot be definitely determined. He may have been an elder, he may have been a deacon or almoner, as the term *diakonos* suggests. Cp. Acts 6:1 f.

We must add a few words concerning the expression "the church that is in thy house." The congregations in those days, as far as we know, did not have their own houses of worship. They generally met in private homes. Philemon, then, was one of those who opened his home to the spiritual needs of his fellow Christians. It is even possible that there were others like him in Colossae who allowed their dwellings to be used for church purposes. The contrast would then be between the group that met in his house and the groups that met elsewhere. Of course, the contrast might also have been between the church in Colossae and the churches that worshiped in private homes in other cities. Certainly there must have been not a few of them. To this day, humanly speaking, the Christian Church owes a great measure of its expansion, under God, to the Christian love and generosity of people like Philemon who, besides giving personal and financial support to the work of the Kingdom, freely grant the use of their homes for divine worship until a suitable chapel or church can be erected. Many of our prosperous churches began in that manner. Such noble work should be recognized by the Church, even as Paul acknowledges the consecrated efforts of Philemon. We must mention, however, that some commentators refer this expression to the so-called *ecclesia domestica*, that is, the family living in a given home. In that case Paul would be including other children of Philemon, if any, as well as the slaves of that household.

To all of these Paul extends his customary greeting, that of wishing them God's grace and peace through Christ Jesus,

grace being the *favor Dei propter Christum* and peace the objective state of reconciliation which exists between God and the world through Christ and from which the personal, or subjective, peace of heart and mind on the ransomed sinner's part flows. Luther writes: 'Und wird in den zwei kleinen kurzen Woertlein, Gnade und Friede, die Summa und Inhalt der ganzen christlichen Lehre begriffen. Die Gnade vergibt die Suende, so hilft der Friede dem Gewissen zur Ruhe. Denn zwei Teufel sind, die uns sehr wohl plagen: die Suende und das Gewissen. . . . Darum so begreifen diese zwei Stuecke, Gnade und Friede, das ganze christliche Wesen in sich. Die Gnade, Vergebung der Suenden; der Friede, ein froehlich und friedsam Gewissen. . . . Darum hat St. Paulus die Weise, dasz er allewege im Gruss seiner Epistel wuenschet Gnade und Friede, damit man gegen der Suende und boesem Gewissen bestehen moege. . . . Und das muss man wahrlich auf das allerbeste lernen. Die Worte sind zwar leichte, aber in der Anfechtung das ins Herz bringen und gewisslich halten, dasz wir Vergebung der Suenden und Friede mit Gott nur allein aus lauter Gnade, ohne aller und allerlei Werk und Mittel Zutun, im Himmel und auf Erden haben sollen, das ist ueber die Massen ein schwer Ding' (*ad Gal.1:13*). Luther, then, does not differentiate sharply between objective and subjective peace, and that probably for the very practical reason that in the Christian's heart the one is so closely bound up with the other. Because the believer cherishes God's peaceful attitude toward him through Christ, his anxious heart becomes tranquil. Franz Pieper, however, in his *Christliche Dogmatik*, draws the line sharply when he says: "Das Wort (Friede) bezeichnet hier, wenn man genau reden will, nicht sowohl das Friedensverhaeltnis, in dem *wir* zu Gott stehen, als das objektive Friedensverhaeltnis, in dem *Gott* durch Christum zu den Menschen steht, und das Menschen geniessen, sofern sie es glauben" (II: 5, 6).

A word or two might be added here with regard to the words "from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." It goes without saying that Paul is here thinking of God not as the Creator of all men, but as the kind and benevolent Father of those who through faith in His Son have become His spiritual children. As far as the words "and the Lord Jesus Christ" are concerned, the question arises, whether this

genitive is dependent upon the preposition *from* or upon the genitive *Father*, both constructions being possible on the basis of the original. In other words, are grace and peace to come from the Father and the Son, or are they to come from God, who is the Father of us and of Jesus Christ. Both Luther and the A. V. consider them as coming from both, though the A. V. is somewhat inconsistent. Both here and in 1 Cor. 1:3 the greeting is identical in the original, yet the A. V. once adds the preposition *from* in italics, the other time it omits it. 1 Thess. 1:1 strengthens us in the belief that Paul thinks of these blessings as coming from both, Father and Son. For there Paul conceives the Thessalonian church to be *in* God the Father and *in* the Lord Jesus Christ (locatives). Nor is the word *Lord* to be overlooked, that name which is above every name, Phil. 2:5-11, which was given to Him in recognition of His victorious and perfect fulfillment of the mediatorial task entrusted to Him by His and our heavenly Father. Why Paul consistently makes no mention of the Holy Spirit in these apostolic greetings is difficult to say, all the more because he mentions all three persons in the well-known benediction 2 Cor. 13:13.

This, then, is the sum and substance of Paul's apostolic wish to Philemon and to the other Christians at Colossae, that the good work which was begun in them may be performed in them unto the Day of Jesus Christ. And, we might add, it is not only a wish, but a renewed offer of divine grace which, being the quick and powerful Word of God, was calculated and able to work that which it offered, namely, pardon and peace from God, through Jesus Christ, here and hereafter.

II. *Acknowledgment of Philemon's Fine Spiritual State*

"I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers, hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus and toward all saints; that the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother." Vv. 4-7.

Paul begins this section with an expression of great joy

and gratitude over Philemon's active Christianity. Continuous, unceasing prayer was one of the chief characteristics of this great missionary to the Gentiles, not only the prayer for help and blessing from above for himself and for his churches, but also ceaseless prayers of thanksgiving for blessings received, especially the blessing of success in his work; not only for the progress of his work *in toto*, but also for individual conquests over the powers of darkness. In spite of many disappointing and bitter experiences he is not discouraged, but has eyes to see good things and appreciation to acknowledge them with gratitude. His experiences with Philemon is a case in point.

Paul himself had evidently been God's instrument to win Philemon for Christ, as the last words of v. 19 show. And as we have already noted in the introduction, this was not one of those conversions which consisted merely in one's alignment with a Christian congregation, but one which became evident to all by a manifestation of splendid character and tireless Christian activity. Philemon's case was so outstanding in Paul's mind that he placed him on his prayer list, mentioning his name constantly (present participle), thanking God for that encouraging experience, and no doubt adding the request that God might cause him to abound yet more and more and preserve him from all bodily and spiritual harm.

The reason for Paul's gratitude is stated in these words: "Hearing of thy love and faith which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus and toward all saints." This is a peculiar construction which must be rightly understood, lest a false impression be gained. For while it is proper to speak of Philemon's *love* toward Christ and all the saints, it would not be proper to speak of his *faith* toward Christ and the saints. We have here the figure of speech called chiasmus, that is, an inverted parallelism, examples of which we have in Matt. 7:6; Phil. 1:15 ff.; 3:10; 1 Thess. 5:6.* What made Paul very

* This figure, as books on rhetoric tell us, derives its name from the Greek letter *Chi* (X) and indicates a crisscross construction. In this particular case we have the four words: love, faith, Jesus, saints. Of these, faith and Jesus belong together, while love crosses over to connect with saints. In Matt. 7:6 we have this: (1) Give not that which is holy to the dogs; (2) neither cast ye your pearls before swine; (3) lest they trample them under their feet; (4) and turn again and rend you. It is quite clear that in this case also 1 and 4, 2 and 3 must be paired.

happy and grateful was Philemon's sincere faith in the Savior and his eager activity in manifesting his faith by works of love toward all the saints. As far as this term *saints* is concerned, Paul is not thinking of perfect people. Such do not exist this side of heaven. He is thinking of those who through the power of God's Holy Spirit have been brought to faith in Jesus Christ and thereby received complete pardon from God for their sins. In God's sight they are indeed holy and blameless, but for Jesus' sake. Might we still add that the participle *hearing* is in the present tense? News of Philemon's faith and love had not reached Paul only once, but had come to his attention again and again, for which reason he included the name of this illustrious church member at Colossae on his prayer list.

And what did Paul ask that Heaven might graciously grant with reference to Philemon? "That the communication (fellowship) of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus." What does Paul mean? Luther translates: ". . . dass dein Glaube, den wir miteinander haben, in dir kraeftig werde durch Erkenntnis alle des Guten, das ihr habt, in Christo Jesu." Much could be said and written, but in the last analysis it was doubtless the Apostle's wish that Philemon's good example might become contagious, that his example might provoke or incite others, might prove an inspiration and incentive to him and others for every good thing, to abound yet more and more, as Paul so frequently urges, especially in 1 Thessalonians.

In verse 7 Paul explains: "For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother." The term here used to describe the emotions of the beneficiaries of Philemon's charity is somewhat offensive to our Occidental taste, but among the Orientals of ancient days it was quite common. The Greek poets considered the bowels, that is, the heart, lungs, liver, etc., as the seat of violent passions such as anger or love. The Hebrews employed this term to denote the tenderer affections — kindness, benevolence, compassion. The very innermost thoughts were considered by the Jew to be located in the reins, or kidneys. As a matter of fact, we, too, speak of the heart as the seat of emotions. Here is a typically Greek

expression, for which we have no exact idiom. Perhaps Good-speed comes as close as anyone to the Apostle's thought: "The hearts of God's people have been cheered by you." Note also the term *brother*, an endearing term, assuring Philemon of his fraternal affection, possibly designed to win his heart to grant the request Paul is about to make.

Before considering this request, which is the chief thought and purpose of the letter as contained in the next section, we append a few observations by way of practical application:

1. Like Paul, we do well to have an eye to, and to be grateful for, the good things that are done by our parishioners, rather than to bemoan their sins and shortcomings. Not only that, but to speak words of appreciation and encouragement to people whose example may provoke others to greater sanctification and charity is part of true pastoral wisdom, 2 Cor. 9:1-2.

2. To cultivate the habit of regular prayer, not merely for ourselves, but also on behalf of our parishioners, even to the extent of having a prayer list.

3. To set our standards ever higher and to encourage our members to abound yet more and more for the Lord's sake, not only in faith and knowledge, but also in good works. Our motto, which we should also recommend to, and impress upon, our people, must ever be: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after."

III. *Paul's Appeal on Behalf of Onesimus*

"Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds; which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me; whom I have sent again. Thou, therefore, receive him, that is, mine own bowels; whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the Gospel. But without thy mind would I do nothing, that thy benefit should not be, as it were, of necessity, but willingly. For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever; not

now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord! If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account. I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it, albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides. Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord; refresh my bowels in the Lord. Having confidence in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say." Vv. 8-21.

In this main section of the letter we have the Apostle's gracious intercession in behalf of Philemon's reclaimed slave, which for the sake of clarity may again be divided into six brief portions.

To begin with, he presents a very tactful approach to the request. He says: "Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ," vv. 8-9. We note first of all that Paul closely connects this request with the foregoing. Having just seen fit to extol Philemon's love in ministering to the needs of the saints, he decides to make his appeal on the basis of that selfsame love. He knows that as an Apostle of Jesus Christ he has the right to make this request in the form of a demand. Even though, as we shall see, he makes no move in the direction of abolishing slavery, he lets it be known, in Ephesians and Colossians for example, that masters were not at liberty to abuse and maltreat their slaves, but were in solemn Christian duty bound to forbear threatening and to give their slaves that which was just and equal. Yet, rather than undertake to command his dear friend and spiritual son, he is content to admonish or entreat him on the basis of love, to which he adds the further plea that Philemon would respect Paul's age. Some commentators indeed, following the example of the LXX in considering *presbytes* the equivalent of *presbeutes*, a term which Paul uses in Eph. 6:20, where he calls himself an ambassador in chains, translate *ambassador* rather than *aged*. That would hardly seem plausible. Paul had just stated that he would not emphasize his authority as an Apostle; would he now in

the same breath assert it nevertheless? It seems so much more in harmony with the context to imagine Paul as saying: "Friend Philemon, as an Apostle of Jesus Christ I really have the right to expect obedience of you in any duty, but I am just appealing to you as your old friend Paul, who is now also languishing in prison." That should suffice to warm the heart of his wealthy friend in Colossae.

Now, what was the request? He goes on: "I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds; which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me; whom I have sent again. Thou, therefore, receive him, that is, mine own bowels." Vv. 10-12. The situation was this. Philemon had had a slave by the name of Onesimus, meaning useful. Possibly this name had been given to him by his master in recognition of efficient and faithful services rendered. But in the meantime he had become very useless. Seeing an opportunity, he had absconded, presumably with a sizable sum of his master's money, and had successfully made his way to Rome, or Caesarea, or Ephesus, or wherever the Apostle was imprisoned at that time. In some undisclosed manner this runaway slave had come within the sound of Paul's Gospel message, had felt its power in his heart, and had yielded to the saving call. More than that. He had begun at once to manifest an active faith, proving himself extremely useful to the ambassador of Jesus Christ in chains, so much so, that Paul was loath to part with him. For he goes on: "Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the Gospel," v. 13. Yes, Paul could have made good use of him, Onesimus could have rendered him valuable services during his imprisonment for the Gospel's sake, the same Gospel to which Philemon owed his conversion. Well might Paul therefore have reasoned that Philemon should have no objections to his retention of Onesimus, even as few people would have thought the worse of Paul for keeping him. But the Apostle was most scrupulously honest and conscientious. Having learned that Onesimus belonged to Philemon, the thought of the Tenth Commandment would not permit him to retain Onesimus without first obtaining the consent of his lawful owner. Nor was Paul content to send the message through another. He determined to send Onesimus back;

then Philemon could do as he pleased. If he chose to make this contribution for the cause of the Gospel, well. Then his contribution would be voluntary, not compulsory. Therefore Paul adds: "But without thy mind I would do nothing, that thy benefit should not be, as it were, of necessity, but willingly," v. 14. Thus no suspicion whatever could be fastened upon the great Apostle that he had coveted another man's possessions or used crafty methods to achieve his ends.

But Paul is not yet finished. Having in spirit already discharged his duty in returning Onesimus, he now moves the whole affair into the focus of Divine Providence, of which God's children should at all times be mindful as of a power and goodness that has all things under control and guides and shapes them so that they must serve the best interests of believers. He says: "For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever; not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord!" Vv. 15-16. "Perhaps," he says. To the human eye it did not appear thus, just as Joseph of old did not suspect the hand of God when his brothers sold him to the Midianites, yet later on confessed to them: "God meant it unto good." So here. Onesimus' escape seemed perfectly natural, yet the gracious Father in heaven had made use of it to bring him into contact with His saving Gospel and to reclaim him for heaven. Thus Philemon would be getting him back in a two-fold sense; first, as his slave, since by law Onesimus was still Philemon's property; secondly, as a brother, a fellow Christian, a fellow heir of eternal salvation through Jesus Christ.

And as such Paul now begs Philemon to take him back, if indeed he does not wish to relinquish his title and send him back to the Apostle. So he continues, vv. 17-21, saying in effect: "If you count me your comrade and friend, then receive Onesimus as though it were I that is coming to you. Did he wrong you in any way? Did he take any of your money? Charge it to me, I'll pay it. See, I am signing that promise with my own hand. Still, I should like to have you not to forget that you owe yourself to me, for it was I who brought you to Christ through the Gospel. Yes, brother, I am asking this favor of you. Do not refuse me, but give

me another opportunity to rejoice and be thankful over your sincere Christian love. I know that you will not refuse me."

As we ponder this complete section, we cannot fail to admire the superb tact and skill with which Paul presented and pressed his request to Philemon for leniency on Onesimus' behalf. Who could resist such a masterful appeal? If thoughts of anger had clamored for reprisal toward Onesimus in the heart of Philemon, he could hardly do anything but forgive and forget when he read these tender lines. But we have no further information on this, nor is there any hint that Onesimus was returned to St. Paul. Yet the entire affair gives us a most beautiful insight into the heart and mind and character of him who labored and suffered more than any other one man for the spreading of the Gospel and who also at all times upheld the dignity of God's holy Law, lest men should mistake liberty for license and abuse God's grace by willful sinning.

Thus this beautiful little epistle bids us take to heart three all-important Christian principles, namely, to practice strict honesty, to champion the cause of our needy or troubled brethren, and to strive in all phases of life to do the will of God and be an example to others. Luther, in his preface to this letter, emphasizes particularly the second point, as was stated in the introduction.

Before considering the closing words of the Apostle, we ought to inquire briefly into his attitude toward slavery. He neither advocates nor endorses it, neither here nor in other letters; neither does he seek to abolish it. He merely accepts it as an existing institution, sends Onesimus back to his owner, and urges Philemon to receive him with kindness and forbearance. In Ephesians and Colossians he speaks more explicitly, admonishing slaves to obey their masters as they would the Lord, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. As for the masters, they also have their obligations. Remembering that they also have a Master in heaven, they should treat their slaves as fellow human beings, refraining from scowling and abusing, doing for them what is just and equitable. May we not offer this as the sum and substance of proper management-labor relations in our day? We cannot, nor need we, abolish the employer-employee relationship. That is seemingly a permanent and necessary institution. But if employers

will in the fear of God endeavor to do that which is fair and equitable for their working men and women, and if these in turn will comply with just and equitable regulations and do their work as unto the Lord, there could really be lasting labor peace. But this presupposes that which both Philemon and Onesimus had, sincere faith in Jesus Christ. Where faith enters the heart, love, too, will have a dwelling place, love to God and our neighbor, love between employer and employee. And where love rules, envy and strife, discontent and malice, will be subdued. So Paul handled the problem, so we must proceed.

And may we not add a word on pastor-people relationships? Paul makes it prominent here. He reminds Philemon of his debt of gratitude for having been sought and won for the Gospel by him. So even today Christian people must never be permitted to forget what they owe to their pastors and teachers, namely, their very selves. And if pastors and teachers minister spiritual blessings to them, have they not the right to expect material support in return? Yes, Christian people must ever be reminded that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel and that they which are taught in the Word should communicate unto them which teach in all good things. If church members kept mindful of these things and, like Philemon and the other Colossians, prayed for their pastors and teachers, there would not be such carping critics as are frequently found in our churches. Nor would they be so ready to discard an aging servant of the Word for a younger man. Nor would they expect their spiritual leaders to exist on a meager pittance, but they would honor them all the more for their work's sake and do all in their power to give tangible proof of their gratitude for the great blessings received.

IV. *The Conclusion*

"But withal prepare me also a lodging, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you. There salute thee Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus; Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow laborers. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen." Vv. 22-25.

Little need be said on this section. The Apostle expresses his confidence that his wish will be granted. He expects their

prayers for his early release from prison to be answered soon, in which case he hopes to visit Colossae and therefore asks Philemon to have the guest room in readiness. He sends greetings from his colaborers Epaphras, Aristarchus, Mark, Demas, and Luke. Timothy had been mentioned at the outset. Then follows the customary blessing: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."

We close this little study with the concluding remarks found in the *Altenburger Bibelwerk*: "May the gracious God and heavenly Father grant through His Holy Spirit that masters and servants conduct themselves in a Christian manner with respect to commands and obedience; and govern us that we all manifest due brotherly love toward one another, to our own welfare and to the honor of our Christianity, Amen."



Homiletics

OUTLINES ON ISAIAH 53

By OTTOMAR KRUEGER

I

ISAIAH 53

The preceding verses serve as introduction to this chapter and topic. The chapter really begins at Is. 52:13. The general topic is "God's Servant." Who is this Servant? The Talmud says it is the Messiah. Others maintain it was the Jewish nation or the believers in Israel. Others maintain it was Isaiah.

Proof that the Servant is Christ: John 12:39; Rom. 10:16; Matt. 8:17; Acts 8:32; 1 Pet. 2:22; Mark 15:28; 1 Pet. 1:11.

THE SERVANT NOT GENERALLY RECEIVED

1. *Isaiah Complains of This*

Text. Chapter begins with the complaint that people will not accept the Gospel of Christ. Not Isaiah's first complaint by any means. Cf. Chs. 1, 3, 6, 9, etc. However, nothing is so disastrous as indifference toward Gospel and Christ.

"Report" in Hebrew means "sound or message," i. e., Isaiah's preaching. "Arm of the Lord" is God's power and might stretched out to do marvelous things. He did such things all through the history of Israel and now will do the grandest, viz., send the Savior. But who believes it?

2. *St. Paul Complains of It*

We are reminded by our text of St. Paul's words in 1 Cor. 1:18, 22-24 ff. Isaiah had this experience concerning the coming Christ, and St. Paul found coldness towards, and rejection of, the Savior, who had come and died and risen again. In Rom. 10:16 he quotes the Old Testament Prophet's complaint. Jesus Himself referred to it (John 12:38) when the people would not believe in Him.

3. *We Complain of It*

The human heart has not changed since Isaiah's day, and it never will, Gen. 8:21. The Cross of Christ will always be an offense to many.

Hence we find the majority rejecting Christ today. Progress in the Church is slow.

This does not change God's Servant, nor does it detract from His wonderful person and work, of which we hear more in this sermon series.

God grant that we receive Him and His word.

II

ISAIAH 53:2-3

A reason for the unwillingness of many people to accept Christ is His great lowliness, the lack of all outward show, especially His deep humiliation and suffering.

It is difficult for human reason to grasp that all this should be a part of God's plan of salvation. God's thoughts and ways are mysterious also in this point. Proud man cannot see this.

THE SERVANT'S HUMILIATION DESCRIBED

1. *His Most Unusual Appearance*

Christ is described "as tender plant and root out of dry ground." This refers to His humble origin and lowly circumstances. He was of Jesse's house, born at Bethlehem, reared at Nazareth, poor parents, etc.

Christ had no beauty or comeliness in His humiliation. Text. We think of what Paul writes (Phil. 2:5-8) about Christ. Cf. ch. 52:10.

Christ despised of men. The language here is beautiful. Cf. expressions "Man of Sorrows" and "acquainted with grief." We cannot add anything to that. Other prophecies regarding the same thing: Ps. 22 and 69.

2. *This Agrees with the Bible Account Later*

In the Lord's Passion as described by the Four Evangelists all of this came to pass. He was so miserable as though He had ceased to be a human being.

We think of the mockery at the trials, of the mistreatment, of the miserable appearance before Pilate, of His grief in the Garden and on the Cross, of His torment upon the accursed tree; of His death. Matthew 26—27; Mark 14—15; Luke 22—23; John 18—19.

3. *The Reaction on Us and Others*

Text v. 3 b. People turned away from Him in that day and wanted no part with Him. So also today. Natural man wants no suffering Savior, he wants a hero.

We must look beyond this humiliation as Isaiah does, ch. 52:15. We should take care not to be offended in Christ. Matt. 11:6. We may learn lowliness of Christ.

III

ISAIAH 53:4-5

In many schools the 53d chapter of Isaiah served, with many other splendid Bible passages, as memory material. Especially familiar are these two verses, which are often quoted in Lenten sermons. They give us the solution and key to the whole mystery. If you add the last three verses of the preceding chapter to this chapter, then these verses stand right in the center. They treat of

THE SERVANT'S VICARIOUS PASSION

1. A Willing Passion

The Prophet makes a statement of fact, telling us what God's Servant did. "Hath borne" and "carried" do not imply that these griefs and sorrows were thrust upon Him. They rather have the meaning of the Greek *elaben*, which means that He took them upon Himself.

This is correct in the light of the New Testament. Matt. 8:14 quotes Is. 53:4 and declares "He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses." This is also according to 1 Pet. 2:24 and Matt. 26:39 and 42.

Hymn 142:3 — "Yea, Father, yea, most willingly, etc."

2. A Substitutionary Passion

The language of our text is clear and strong to bring out plainly the *satisfactio vicaria*. The contrast is brought out by the pronouns and suffixes of the Hebrew. The Servant of God and His suffering is set over against our transgressions and iniquities. He suffered not for Himself nor for His sins, but for us and our sins.

God was punishing our sins upon His Son. Climax in "*geplagt, geschlagen und gemartert*." In v. 5 the strongest terms are used to show complete misery, as "perforated," "ground up," "thrown to earth."

Testimony of New Testament. Cf. Rom. 4:25, 1 Cor. 15:3; 1 Pet. 3:18.

3. A Sufficient Passion

The facts are stated clearly and can leave no one in doubt. The last statement reads: "We are healed." The Servant did not merely begin our redemption, He completed it. His Passion was all that was needed. To doubt that means to insult Christ and the Father, who sent such a Savior.

Christ left nothing undone. We need not atone for our actual sins as Papists teach. Heb. 10:12, 14, 18; Rom. 5:1; 1 John 1:7.

What a wonderful message concerning our salvation.

IV

ISAIAH 53:6

1 Pet. 2:25: "For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." This agrees perfectly with what Isaiah says here.

This is the key to the terrible suffering described before and after our text. The inquiring person seeks for the reason, and here it is.

THE SERVANT'S SUFFERING CAUSED BY OUR SIN

1. Description of Our Past Condition

Text. "All we like sheep have gone astray." That implies willing disobedience on our part. Mankind sinned willingly in

Eden, Gen. 3. Adam's children followed in his evil example, and sin came upon us all, according to Rom. 5.

There is no exception to this rule. Ps. 14:3; Eccl. 7:20; Is. 64:6. We, too, are headstrong and willful, turning "everyone to his own way." Cf. Jer. 2:13. As such sheep we had no shepherd to lead and protect us. We were without God in the world. So God did something about it. John 3:16.

2. *God Placed Our Guilt on Christ*

The righteous God had to do something about our guilt; He punished it upon His own beloved Son. Not just a bit of it and then let that suffice, but the full amount, "the iniquity of us all." Compared with this load of debts, the postwar debt is insignificant (more than 200 billion national debt).

God looked on Christ as a malefactor and transgressor; our sin was upon Him. The Innocent One steps into the place of the guilty. The Good Shepherd (John 10) replaces the erring sheep and lays down His life for them.

God did this in His justice and love: justice towards sin, love towards the sinners.

3. *Our Guilt, Then, Canceled and Eliminated*

Debts are not paid twice. The "eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth" has been paid by our Substitute and Savior. We go free. Jesus indicated this in the Garden when He took everything upon Himself and guaranteed the liberty of His disciples.

God is for us; therefore all is well. Rom. 8:31-32.

This is the very center of Christian doctrine.

Let us comfort ourselves with it.

V

ISAIAH 53:7-9

When one reads this chapter one gets the impression that Isaiah must have been an eyewitness of Christ's Passion. He speaks as one might who would have been in Gethsemane, in the Judgment Hall, at Golgotha, yet this was written 700 years earlier.

As Luke vividly describes the voyage of St. Paul to Rome, the storm, the shipwreck, so Isaiah describes Christ's Passion.

THE SERVANT'S SUFFERING IN DETAIL

1. *His Trials*

Text, v. 7. These words are descriptive of Christ during the various hearings, or trials, which were given Him before Herod, Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate.

Christ was quiet and resigned. He was led as lamb or sheep to His execution. The idea is repeated for emphasis. We are reminded of the Pascal Lamb of the Old Testament and of what John the Baptist said John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:18.

When Christ opened His mouth, it was in prayer for His enemies, Luke 23:34. The Ethiopian eunuch read this passage and marveled (Acts 8:32); we, too.

2. His Execution

Text, v. 8. Here we see our Savior, the Servant of God, being led out after His being condemned before Caiaphas and Pilate. Who can fully exhaust this story? We have a *crux interpretum* in the question "Who can declare His generation?" Cf. Luther: "*seines Lebens Laenge ausreden.*"

Then we see Christ being crucified, cut off from the land of the living. The soldier makes certain with his spear.

The thought of Christ as our Substitute recurs again and again in Isaiah 53. It is referred to from various angles. Here also in v. 8.

3. His Death and Burial

Text, v. 9. Christ's death and burial belong to His humiliation; hence this verse must be considered as dealing with this phase of His career. He was buried among the sinners near Calvary, that is, "with the wicked." It was the cemetery for the "place of the skull." Yet He was buried in a rich man's grave, viz., that of Joseph of Arimathaea.

All of this suffering was not the end of the "Servant's" career. Is. 52:15; Rom. 4:25; John 12:32.

Let us hail and adore our wonderful Savior.

VI

ISAIAH 53:10

In Lev. 16:20-22 we have God's prescriptions regarding the scapegoat. This animal was brought to Aaron, and he placed both hands upon it and confessed Israel's sins over it. He put all the transgressions of Israel upon this goat. Then a man took the goat out into the desertlike country, called wilderness, and let him go. Thus the goat symbolically carried away the sins of the people. The man returned, the goat did not.

THE SERVANT AS OUR SCAPEGOAT

1. God the Father Used Him as Such

A scapegoat is one that bears the guilt, shame, or punishment for another. Thus God used Christ. He "bruised Him," "He hath put Him to grief," says our text. He became an offering for our sin, as the goat in the Old Testament. (Isaiah's imagery is drawn also from the goat of the sacrifice, Lev. 16:9).

This was all according to God's plan conceived in eternity before the world began. God provided for our salvation in His Son. Eph. 1:3-6; 2 Cor. 5:19. Hymn 384; 142:2.

2. *God Remains Just Through It All*

This we Christians take for granted, knowing God as we do from His Word. Cf. Ps. 33:4; Ps. 145:9; Ex. 34:6-7. However, we are told here that "the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand." So God's work goes forward; He makes no mistakes.

Furthermore, the Savior will "see His seed." This seed are the believers, His followers. There was the Old Testament Church of the faithful and then the Christians of the New Testament. Acts 20:28; John 12:24; John 17:20.

3. *God Accepted His Offering for Our Sins*

The significance of the Old Testament scapegoat. The sins were carried away, and Israel was free. God received the offering given by the people through their priest Aaron.

Here is a greater than Aaron and his sons. Here is our High Priest, who offered up Himself. Heb. 7:26-27. God is satisfied.

VII

ISAIAH 53:11-12

The chapter ends as it began, namely, with visions of great things accomplished and gained. *Vide* ch. 52:13.

First the weight of His tribulation is referred to, and its intensity, but then the glorious results are pictured. The concluding verse binds up the chapter into one harmonious whole. From the literary standpoint there is real unity here.

THE SERVANT'S REWARD AND RESULTS OF HIS WORK

1. *Justification of All Sinners*

The Hebrew conjunction indicates that these now are the consequences of all of Christ's vicarious suffering.

He is just and makes just. He is satisfied at the sight of the justified. Isaiah 11. The Servant shall have a large congregation of righteous as His reward.

The last term, "He shall bear," evidently refers to the high-priestly office of Christ and His intercession for us. 1 John 2:2.

2. *The Spoils Divided*

The Father is speaking of His Servant. Great and prominent sinners came to the Lord as His spoils, cf. Nicodemus, Jairus, Constantine, Charlemagne, etc. Phil. 2:9-11.

As the strong conquerors divided the spoils in history and still do, so Christ, the Lord of Lords, does likewise. He holds the field. His kingdom destroys all others, according to Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

The reason for all this success is that "He poured out His soul unto death and was numbered with the transgressors." Cf. Luke 22:37; Mark 15:28; Heb. 9:28. His glorious work of redemption wins the hearts of men everywhere.

3. *We Are Saved*

This is important for us. The righteous Servant made us righteous and holy. We are among the blessed spoils, thanks to God's grace and mercy.

We have often repented and strengthened our faith by gazing at this suffering and now victorious Servant of God. We trust in His redemption and righteousness.

May this meditation upon the suffering Savior draw us closer to Him and heaven.

A Series of Sermon Studies for the New Church Year

THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

2 PET. 3:11-15 a

The Text and the Day.—Following the suggestion of Dr. Martin Luther, the Reformers Bugenhagen and Veit Dietrich appointed the story of the Transfiguration for the Sixth Sunday after Epiphany as a proper close for the Epiphany season, which deals with the manifestation of the glory of Christ. Since this Sunday is the last Sunday after Epiphany for this year, we follow the Lutheran custom of concentrating on a text that magnifies Christ's glory, particularly at the end of the world.

Notes on Meaning.—The end of the world is inevitable. The present heaven and earth will be destroyed (see context). But Christians need not fall into terror when they recognize the many signs which point to the dissolution of all things (Matt. 24:3 ff.). The Day of the Lord, which will bring consternation on all unbelievers, will be a day of peace and joy in which righteousness will reign for all believers (Is. 11:5 ff.; 25:7 f.; and ch. 35). In fact, believers in Christ look forward to the coming of the Day of the Lord, convinced that the promise of new heavens and a new earth cannot fail (Is. 65:17 ff.; 62:22). The exhortation of the Apostle to constancy in faith is very much in place. Satan will give neither mind nor conscience rest, and the world can easily deceive the Christian and seduce him into sin. Therefore the Apostle urges diligence in clinging to God's Word (regular reading of the Bible; regular attendance at church services and at the Table of the Lord; daily prayer) so that faith can in-

crease in strength and the believer be without spot and blameless (1 Cor. 1:8; 1 Thess. 3:13). Then the believer will understand that the long-suffering of our Lord is not a sign of impotence or disinterestedness (chap. 3:3-4), but evidence of His love to save as many as possible.

Preaching Pitfalls.—Looking at our present world, a preacher could lose himself in painting a lurid picture of the disintegration of family, ecclesiastical, national, and international life. His utterance could be true to the core; but if he dwells too long on the ungodliness of our modern age, he has not enough time to emphasize the Gospel message in the text, and he leaves the individual hearer untouched.

Preaching Emphases.—Our time is not much different from that of St. Peter. The Apostle found it necessary to urge his fellow believers to stand fast in the faith and resist temptation to sin and apostasy, even if such steadfastness should lead to loss of life. In our country there is no persecution entailing bloodshed. Yet there is insidious ridicule of Scripture and open denial of the faith once delivered to the fathers. Our members are exposed to this poison. It comes to them through the movies, the printed page, and the radio. This is subtle persecution and leads some of our people to the brink of apostasy. Therefore we shall have to emphasize the necessity of circumspection, the nearness of the Day of the Lord, the renewal of faith, the beauty of the new heavens and the new earth, and the Lord's desire to save.

Problem and Goal.—A growing number of our people are not taking God and the Bible too seriously. The preacher must strive to get at the conscience of his members, rouse his people out of their lethargy, lead them to the Cross of Jesus, and urge them to believe that the new heavens and the new earth will be a reality through faith in Christ.

Outline:

HOW CAN WE PREPARE FOR THE DAY OF THE LORD?

- I. By recognizing and repenting of our sins.
- II. By believing in Christ as our Savior.
- III. By earnestly striving to lead a life dedicated to God.
- IV. By thanking God for the promise of citizenship in the new heavens and the new earth.

ALEX WM. C. GUEBERT

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY

ROM. 3:27-31

The Text and the Day.—Septuagesima Sunday is numbered among the Sundays which the Lenten Cycle comprises. The blessed, holy Passiontide once again presents to us an opportunity to devote intensive study to the work of redemption by Christ Jesus. So the Propers for this Sunday emphasize man's helplessness, the versicle reading: "If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand?" and God's gracious helpfulness, the versicle concluding: "But there is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared." Our text fits admirably into this cycle, summarizing briefly how our helplessness is solved by God's helpfulness.

Notes on the Meaning.—The burden, the heart and soul, of our text is, of course, v. 28. Since we are justified by faith without the deeds of the Law, man has nothing whereof to boast. V. 28 is a summary of the doctrine of the sinner's justification as set forth in the preceding context, vv. 21-26. Man himself is described in v. 23. Paul's argument is this: If man had fulfilled all the works of the Law to do them, he would have whereof to boast. But since he is justified not by the law of works, but by the law of faith—*law* here being used in its wider meaning of *rule*—all boasting is excluded, aye, would be presumptuous. Nay, rather, God justifies the sinner by grace through faith for Christ's sake. Thus, and thus only, is heaven again opened unto the sinner, regardless of his racial background or origin, whether he be Jew or Gentile. V. 30: "One God," hence there is only one way of salvation. Finally we have the remarkable statement that only he who has been justified by God establishes the Law, lives according to the Law, v. 31. Faith wrought by the Spirit of God takes hold of justification. But faith is not something inactive, lifeless, or dead. Luther: "The nature of faith is that it is something living, busy, active, mighty, so that it is impossible for faith not to be constantly active in doing good. Neither does faith ask whether there be any good works to be done, but does them without being told and is constantly busy." St. L., XIV:97 f.

Preaching Emphases.—The doctrine of justification by faith is the life-giving element, the dayspring from on high, the

all-powerful and only incentive for a Godward life. Only he who is able to say by faith: Ps. 103:2-5, is perfect and thoroughly furnished unto *all* good works, 2 Tim. 3:17. By justification a complete change is brought about in our thinking and will. The powers of the soul are freed from the fetters of sin. The mind becomes enlightened. The will is directed toward God. God is enthroned in the heart. This change, this new life, is ours in Christ, with whom we are united by justifying faith. We are now able to say: "For me to live is Christ," Phil. 1:21. What a marvelous change!

Problem and Goal. — We must arouse each member to a burning desire to serve the living God. How can this be accomplished? Through the preaching of the doctrine of justification. Each member must be reminded again and again of the truth that we are saved, we are justified, to serve. It is God's will that we, who embrace by faith the forgiveness of sins, serve God in gratitude by a godly life, 1 Thess. 4:3; Rom. 12:1; 1 Cor. 6:19-20. We must remind our Christians again and again that it simply is not true that the doctrine of justification by faith lulls the Christians to sleep and renders them inactive in the great cause of God's kingdom. Examples: Life of Christian spouses toward and for each other, Ephesians 5; use of our possessions in the service of God. Justifying faith alone makes it possible for a Christian to dedicate some of his earthly possessions to the service of God in the expansion and upbuilding of His kingdom. We have this doctrine in all its pristine purity. Why isn't there greater activity among our Christians? Because of the weakness of their flesh. Therefore perfection in such sanctified service by the redeemed, restored, forgiven children of God is never attained in this life. But that fact should not keep us from urging our Christians again and again to strive for the goal, Phil. 3:12. And the preaching of the doctrine of justification by faith is necessary as the life-giving, strengthening element to incite our Christians to greater sanctification.

Outline:

THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH IN ITS
INFLUENCE UPON OUR LIVES

I. What does justification by faith mean?

A. Description of this act of God. Context, vv. 23-24.

- B. Necessity of it. Context, vv. 23, 27.
 - C. All-inclusiveness of it (only way), vv. 29-30.
 - D. Appropriated by faith, v. 28.
- II. How does this doctrine influence our lives?
- A. Complete change of the heart and the will.
 - B. Enables Christians to establish the Law, v. 31.
 - C. Imperfect in this life. Still too often inclined to boast, v. 27. By imperfections covered by the Redeemer's sacrifice and blood.
 - D. This doctrine constant incentive to strive for perfection.

Conclusion: Gal. 2: 20.

WALTER H. BOUMAN

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY

1 COR. 1:18-24

The Text and the Day.—We are at the threshold of the Lenten season. The proper voice the pleas of God's people — "redeem," "deliver," "save Thy people" — which find their answer in the message of Lent. The texts of various series show the right attitude toward Christ. Others, including the Gospel for the day, call attention to the preaching of the life-giving Word. This thought is also emphasized in our text.

Notes on Meaning.—The text becomes more meaningful to us after we have read at least the first four chapters of Paul's letter. Note how often he refers to our important office in these chapters and how definitely he gives all glory to God for whatever is accomplished through our ministry. The A. V. may well speak of the "Word" of the Cross as "preaching" in view of the entire context. Our preaching is foolishness to men as long as they are perishing. To them we are a savor of death unto death (2 Cor. 2:16). Our preaching shows its power by converting men and continues as the power of God in those who are being saved (present participle), among whom Paul includes *us*, pastors and people. Let us learn of Paul to use personal pronouns, always drawing our hearers into our sermons, knowing that God's power works in their hearts and lives through our preaching. During Lent we shall

find them to be especially receptive to our preaching. Let us make full use of our opportunities.

Paul, himself inspired, proves his points by quoting the Old Testament. Do we always furnish Scripture proof for our statements? In v. 20 he applies the Word to his day. Do we? The wise Greek, the Jewish scribe with his technical treatment of the Law, the sophist (Jew and Greek) debating in the schools, had had their day and had produced the skepticism which caused Pontius Pilate to exclaim, "What is truth!" But in the wisdom of God (thanks be to Him for it, Matt. 11:25) man need not and cannot use his own wisdom to know God, i. e., as his God and Lord. Instead, God uses a means which is applicable to all because it demands nothing of man. By the foolishness of preaching He saves those whom He brings to faith through our preaching.

The message of the Cross is not what men think they need. The Jews wanted a sign. On the basis of Daniel 7:13 they were expecting a "Son of the clouds" to appear as their deliverer. They were, therefore, offended at Christ, the lowly servant of man. The Greeks sought the highest wisdom and could see no wisdom whatever in the teaching that death would bring life, that weakness would become power, that shame and contempt would lead to glory. But Christ, the Crucified, actually achieved all of this by His death.

When meditating on v. 23, first place the accent on the name "Christ." Get the full implication of the title. Then note the word "crucified." See how it magnifies sin and wrath as well as forgiveness and grace. Christ becomes the power of God and the wisdom of God *for us* only as the Crucified. "Christ crucified." Here are the mysteries of God of which the Lord has made us stewards; here are the treasures with which we are to enrich men's lives; here is the sole reason for our ministry; here is the guarantee that our preaching will not be in vain. Christ crucified! He is seemingly helpless, yet in that weakness He destroys him who had the power of death. What a proof of His deity and of His redemptive power! He is seemingly a contradiction in Himself, yet He affords a plan of salvation which is applicable to all men, regardless of race, color, nationality (v. 24), with no criticism resting either on the result or on the manner of reaching it Rom. 9—11,

esp. 11:33). What a proof of His wisdom! Christ crucified — as such He will be praised throughout eternity (Rev. 5:12).

Preaching Pitfalls. — We may be tempted to devote a good portion of the sermon to the presentation of the theories of the leaders of thought (vv. 20-22), forgetting what Paul says in 1:17; 2:1-2; and in our text. Again, we may be tempted to seek to make the message of the Cross reasonable to men, hoping to convince the learned, forgetting 1:17.

Problem and Goal. — We, as the called ministers of Christ, are to consider the preaching of the simple Gospel truths our highest office, since only through this message the power and wisdom of God becomes operative in the hearts and lives of our members. Our preaching should fill them with such a longing for the message of the Cross that they will feel impelled to attend the coming Lenten services for the strengthening of their faith, hope, and love. In the theme suggested below the wisdom of God is mentioned. In each part of the sermon this wisdom of God should be clearly shown.

Outline:

GOD'S WISDOM IN THE PLAN OF SALVATION

- I. He requires nothing of man, since man can offer nothing.
- II. He provides everything in Christ, who is our all-sufficient Savior.
- III. He makes it our duty and privilege to preach the Word of salvation to all mankind.

Springfield, Ill.

MARK J. STEEGE

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY

JAMES 3:13-18

The Text and the Day. — The day is the Sunday before the beginning of Lent. Since the text is Law, not Gospel, it can be used as a preparation for the Lenten season in the sense that it is a call to repentance, an Ash Wednesday theme.

Notes on Meaning. — The Epistle of James deals mainly with the Law; as such it condemns the sinner, but it also is a rule for the Christian. The immediate preceding context

dwells on sins of the tongue. This text has as its theme "Wisdom." This "wisdom from above" is a grace possessed by one who is a Christian.

"Conversation," ἀναστροφή, does not refer to mere speaking, but has the wider connotation "manner of life." V. 13 refers to the fact that this wisdom from above is characterized by the quality of meekness. The wisdom from below shows itself in the opposite: strife, bitterness, etc. This wisdom may even glory in the fact that it puts up a fight and an argument and feels proud at having bested and humbled an opponent. — V. 14. "Truth" in this verse may be taken as the equivalent of "Gospel." The meaning then is: Do not try to justify your personal strife and enmity as though required by the fact that you have the truth, since such conduct belies the Gospel. — V. 15. "Earthly" refers to the fact that such wisdom from below is of the cheap kind which may appear impressive, but is really shallow and of a low level. "Sensual," ψυχική, does not mean "spiritual," but "on no higher level than that which animates the physical body." — V. 17. "Easy to be intreated," or "yielding," just the opposite of a persistent claiming to be right. — V. 18. The meaning is that the harvest which righteousness ("righteousness" taken here as a quality of a Christian) is to produce must be sown in a peaceful way by those who love peace; such a harvest is never produced by strife and envy.

Preaching Pitfalls. — The text is a text of Law and must be preached as such. The "wisdom from above" in the Christian is a fruit of faith, not faith itself; not to be confused with "wisdom unto salvation." The preacher will add a discussion of the source of the "wisdom from above," namely, the Spirit of God.

Preaching Emphases and Goal. — The emphasis of the text is on peaceful conduct among Christians as opposed to envy and strife. The former flows from the wisdom from above, the latter from the wisdom from below. That peacefulness, gentleness, and an attitude of yielding in a controversy is wisdom is often unbelievable to our selfish and proud hearts.

The text can be brought into relation with the season as a call to repentance at the beginning of Lent.

Outline:

WHO IS A WISE MAN?

- I. There is a wisdom from below.
 - A. It delights in envy and strife.
 - B. It even lies against the truth.
 - C. It is earthly, sensual, devilish.
 - D. It results in confusion and every evil.
- II. There is a wisdom from above.
 - A. It shows itself in meekness.
 - B. It is pure, gentle, easy to be intreated, etc.
 - C. It works for peace.

H. O. A. KEINATH



Miscellanea

Luther's Attitude Toward the Jews Up to 1536 *

By RALPH MOELLERING

II

There is no indication that the young Luther either in his boyhood or during his university training had even accidental contacts with Jews. Perhaps his attention was first drawn directly to the Jewish question during the Pfefferkorn-Reuchlin controversy.

Fanatical Dominicans at Cologne, typified by Hochstraten and Ortuin de Craos of Deventer, were the most avid heresy hunters of the time. For their anti-Jewish activity they depended upon material supplied by baptized Jews. Victor von Karben was one of their most helpful collaborators. When he died in 1515, he was supplanted by Johann Pfefferkorn,¹ whose avowed intention was to convert his former co-religionists. In his *Joedenspiegel* (1507) he argued that it was unreasonable to refuse Christianity. He gives three reasons for the pertinacity of the Jews: (1) They were permitted to practice usury, (2) they were not compelled to attend the churches, and (3) they were obdurate in their attachment to the Talmud. In *Der Juden Beicht* (1508) he ridiculed Jewish rites practiced during the penitential days and on the Day of Atonement. *Der Juden Veindt* appeared the following year, with the assertion that all Jews were perjurers, that Jewish physicians deliberately killed Christians, and that all Jews must be either expelled or assigned to menial tasks.²

The Dominicans were zealous for action and introduced Pfefferkorn to Kunigunde, the sister of Maximilian, who had entered a Franciscan convent after a disappointing marriage. She listened with religious indignation to his accounts of Jewish blasphemy and addressed a pressing letter to the emperor, conjuring him to issue a decree against Jewish writings. But Pfefferkorn encountered

* This is the continuation of an essay whose first part was printed in our December, 1948, issue.

¹ According to Hirsch, *A Book of Essays*, p. 74: "A willing and energetic accessory in a conspiracy of the Dominicans of Cologne against Jewish wealth." Graetz holds to the theory that he was a Moravian butcher who was caught at burglary and who hoped to wipe out the disgrace by becoming a Christian. Ludwig Geiger, in his life of Reuchlin, denies that Pfefferkorn had been either a butcher or a burglar or that his conversion and subsequent persecutions of the Jews were dictated by mercenary motives.

² If Luther in his later period made use of the writings of Pfefferkorn, he does not mention it. And yet some observers might detect a parallel between the development of his position and that of the baptized Jew whom Geiger characterizes as a man of violent fanaticism, who attempted to convert the Jews to Christianity by writings and persuasion, and who became violent, abusive, and outrageous after he had been irritated by opposition. Cf. Hirsch, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

considerable opposition in putting the mandate into effect; and since Reuchlin was at the zenith of his fame at this time, it was no more than natural that he approached him in an effort to solicit his support. The eminent Hebraist declined to condemn all Jewish books indiscriminately. The best Christian commentaries on the Old Testament, he said, had borrowed from Jewish exegesis. The Hebrew writings on philosophy and natural science were contributions to the general field of learning and should not be distinguished from similar works in Greek, Latin, or German. He defended the cabalistic writings by pointing to Pico della Mirandola, who maintained that they contained the most solid foundation for the chief doctrines of Christianity. He advocated gentle means for leading the Jews to embrace Christianity.³ But the reactionaries at Cologne declared that all Talmudic writings should be seized and burned. Pfefferkorn attacked Reuchlin in his *Handspiegel*, calling him an apostate who was bribed by the Jews. Reuchlin was compelled to answer with *Augenspiegel* (1511), in which he protested his innocence of any illegal complicity with Jews and concluded that "a Christian should love a Jew as his neighbor."⁴

Hochstraten summoned him to appear at Mayence on the charge of heresy. Reuchlin appealed to Pope Leo X, and a tribunal was set up to pronounce judgment. The decision exonerated Reuchlin (1514), declaring that he had not displayed undue favoritism toward Jews and that his enemies were guilty of slander. The Cologne Dominicans were by no means satisfied, and the controversy soon spread all over Europe, with an informal association of Humanists backing Reuchlin, while the University of Paris decided against him. Maximilian assumed a vacillating position, but did not submit to demands that the Jews be banished throughout his realm. This he rebelled against as an encroachment on his suzerainty. The logomachy between Pfefferkorn and his rivals deteriorated into indecent vilification.⁵

Luther was still a student and monk while this dispute was raging, but he was not entirely detached from the proceedings. He openly favored Reuchlin, for whom he had the utmost respect and admiration. In response to an inquiry by George Spalatin he declared that he saw nothing heretical or dangerous in the position taken by the Hebrew grammarian.⁶ When Maximilian agreed to

³ Graetz, *History of the Jews*, Vol. IV, p. 442 ff. Meanwhile Pfefferkorn had written *Zu Lob und Ehre des Fuersten Maximilian* (1510), an attempt to exert moral pressure on the emperor.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 447-448.

⁵ In his last pamphlet Pfefferkorn had a picture of Reuchlin quartered and hanged. Hermann von Busche and Ulrich von Hutten composed a poem in which Reuchlin is depicted as triumphing over his enemies. The authors gloat over the cruel torture of Pfefferkorn, dwelling on the gory details in such a sadistic way that it will tend to arouse some sympathetic feelings in humane readers. Cf. Hirsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-114.

⁶ Lewin, *Luthers Stellung zu den Juden*, p. 1.

decree the confiscation of rabbinical literature, Luther said it would have been much better to turn the tables on the Dominicans and destroy their distortions of Scripture.⁷

Luther's estimate of the Jews developed in conjunction with his theology. Gleams of his general attitude were already reflected in his *Vorlesungen ueber den Psalter* (1513—16).⁸ The religious zeal of the Jews is misplaced, he thought. Their literal interpretation of the prophetic writings leads to confusion; their Messianic expectations are futile; their hope is carnal instead of spiritual; they are forever learning, but never understanding. They are devoid of true wisdom when they grope in the darkness of their ancient ignorance, rejecting newly revealed truth. Their prayers are useless. Their Savior will not arrive, because he is a figment of their own imagination. They are the slaves of a damning work-righteousness. They adhere rigidly to the Law of God in an outward formalism, but they fail to perceive the spirit of the Law.⁹ They have locked themselves outside the Kingdom of God. They have hardened themselves against partaking of God's grace. Arrogantly they cling to their errors, suffer persecution at the hands of their enemies, and will eventually be consigned to everlasting perdition.

Luther was probably prompted by the lectures of Reuchlin on the cabalistic writings to turn his attention to the Jewish *Geheimlehre*. He attacks the superstitious veneration for the Tetragram and the magical formulas, through which they hoped to appease God.¹⁰ There are indications in the *Operationes in Psalmos* (1519 to 1521)¹¹ that Luther does not despair of Israel's salvation. He is not in sympathy with those Christians who wish all manner of evil upon the Jews and gloat over their misfortune. Through their cruelty they prevent Jews from accepting Christianity. Luther is opposed to those "passion preachers" who misuse the Lenten season to incite hatred against the Jews.¹² In a petition for errorists he includes the Jews.¹³ It is noteworthy that he makes no specific mention of the Jews in either his short or his long sermon on usury in 1519. Apparently he did not think of the Jews as incurable usurers at this time.

But it would be an unwarranted conclusion to assume that Luther began his career with an altogether favorable opinion of

⁷ Cf. *Werke*, W. A., VIII, 52.

⁸ Cf. W. A., III, IV; Lewin, *op. cit.*, pp. 3—4.

⁹ "Es ist ihr Fehler, dass sie nur auf ihr Geschwaetz hoeren wollen und nichts geistig auffassen; sie verharren in ihrem toten Schrifttum, besudeln alles und verderben die Bibel." W. A., III, 587.

¹⁰ Luther views the Tetragram as a symbol of the Holy Trinity. Cf. W. A., V, 184 ff.

¹¹ W. A., V. See particularly the explanation of Psalm 14, 427 ff.

¹² W. A., II, 136. Cf. Sermon in W. A., XXXIII, 623 f.

¹³ W. A., VI, 16. *Ein kurze Form, das Paternoster zu verstehen* (1519).

the Jews.¹⁴ In 1510 the baptized Jew Johann Boeschenstein was called to Wittenberg as a lecturer in Hebrew, but displeased Luther immensely. The complaint was that he laid too much stress on prosody, as though his listeners were Jews. When he left, Luther passed the judgment on him: "In name a Christian, in reality a genuine Jew."¹⁵ He had similar experiences with his successor Matthias Adrianus, who only taught at Wittenberg for one year. When he asked for his dismissal, Luther wrote: "We have granted it to him immediately. So we are rid of this man."¹⁶ Certainly Luther was not attracted by what some would call "the peculiarities of the Jewish character."

Jewish critics of the Protestant Reformer like to emphasize his inadequate knowledge of Hebrew.¹⁷ However, we know that Luther had begun the study of Hebrew at the University of Erfurt. Through the medium of Reuchlin's *Grammar* he learned the elements of the Jews' sacred language as taught to Christians by Elias Levita. In April, 1519, he sent the *Grammar* of Moses Kimchi to Johann Lang. Petrus Mosellanus testified in December in his letter about the Leipzig Debate that Luther had learned enough Hebrew to be able to render judgments on interpretation. Together with Melancthon he continued to study Hebrew during the following year. While he was at the Wartburg grappling with intricate problems in translation, he expressed the wish that he might receive instruction in Hebrew. Lewin interprets this as an admission of ignorance, but it is rather an indication of his eagerness to gain deeper insight into the meaning of the Masoretic text. Similarly, when a friend sent him a little Hebrew book and requested that he supply a table of contents and he declined to comply, it is not necessarily a confession of his inability to do so.¹⁸ It proves nothing to cite, as Newman does, Luther's statement: "How I hate people who lug in so many languages, as Zwingli does; he spoke Greek and Hebrew in the pulpit at Marburg." This does not demonstrate that Luther disliked Hebrew. He meant that it was unnecessary to obscure clear issues with abstract

¹⁴ Lewin believes that Luther had a narrow concept of the Jews grounded on Biblical patterns. His attitude was based on "blosse Buecherweisheit."

¹⁵ Luther wrote to his friend Johann Lang: "ille noster Boeschenstein nomine Christianus, re vera Judaissimus, ad nostrae Universitatis ignominiam recessit." Cf. Newman, *Jewish Influence on Christian Reform Movements*, p. 619.

¹⁶ Enders, *Luthers Briefwechsel*, 1, 278; 3, 87.

¹⁷ "His use of Jewish exegesis was usually secondhand." Cohn in the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, p. 241. "He did not go back to the original text; indeed, he admits that he was not a Hebrew scholar and especially that he knew nothing of Hebrew grammar," *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. VIII, Article on Luther. "Luther never mastered Hebrew, having a deep-seated distaste for Hebrew grammar, which, he asserted, was a concoction of the rabbis, studiously to be avoided," Newman, *op. cit.*, page 623.

¹⁸ January, 1525. Cf. Lewin, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

terminology. On occasion he felt obliged to defend the study of Hebrew, as when he said:

The Hebrew tongue is altogether despised because of impiety or perhaps because people despair of learning it. Without this language there can be no understanding of the Scriptures, for the New Testament, although written in Greek, is full of Hebraisms. It is rightly said that the Hebrews drink from the fountains; the Greeks from the streams, and the Latin from the pools. I am no Hebrew grammarian, nor do I wish to be; for I cannot bear to be hampered by rules, but *I am quite at ease in the language*. . . . The translators of the Septuagint were unskilled in Hebrew; and their version is extremely poor, even though literal. . . .¹⁹

Luther was convinced that he arrived at a better expression of the thought content of Scripture than those slavish grammarians who were content with a literal translation. They often missed the intended sense by conforming punctiliously to textbook rules.

Lewin would like to call the momentous days spent at Worms a "turning point in Luther's attitude toward the Jews." Presumably two Jews came to Worms seeking Luther's counsel. After they had exhilarated his spirits with a little wine, they asked him questions about the Scriptures. He refuted their assertion that the Hebrew word in Is. 7:14 could mean any young woman, not necessarily a virgin. One of the Jews agreed with Luther. The other opposed him. Such a heated argument ensued between the Jews that they almost came to blows and had to be forcibly evicted by the servants. According to Lewin's theory, there were completely new elements in this situation. For the first time Luther had come into actual contact with Jews. It was encouraging for him to discover that they welcomed social intercourse with him and flattering to know that they valued his advice. Perhaps they were not as incorrigible as he had assumed. After Worms, Luther recognized that he would have to break with Rome. He needed friends and support from other quarters. Besides, who could blame the Jews for rejecting Christianity if one considered that what they were offered was superstitious Romanism?

Lewin has projected an attractive assumption as a guide for his interpretation of Luther's later behavior, but the whole hypothesis bogs down when we investigate and discover that Luther never mentions this incident "of inestimable importance." The first report of it was not written down until twenty-eight years after Luther's death. Not only is the reliability of the story dubious, but the claim that such a trivial occurrence could create a profound and lasting impression upon the Reformer amid the world-shaking events at the Diet is open to question, to say the least.²⁰

¹⁹ Translated by Smith, P., in *Table Talks*, 1915, p. 181 f.

²⁰ Koestlin-Kawerau, *Martin Luther, sein Leben und seine Schriften*, 1903, I, p. 422; Heinrich Boehmer, *Der junge Luther*, Gotha, 1925, p. 371, consider the entire episode a legend. For a criticism of Lewin's theory cf. Walther, *Luther, die Juden, und die Antisemiten*, pp. 12-13.

Luther's "changed" attitude is supposed to be reflected already in writings composed at the Wartburg. In the *Magnificat* he states that the grace of God will result in the conversion of some Jews. He advises a more cordial approach on the part of Christians, but if they will not hear the truth, they should not be pampered.²¹ There is nothing sensational nor new in all this.

In 1523 there appeared Luther's first major writing concerning the Jews. The immediate incentive for *Dass Jesus Christus ein geborner Jude sei*²² was the credence given to the report that the new teaching denied the virgin birth of Christ. Luther was infuriated by the accusation and determined to answer this calumny without delay. At the same time he was not averse to including an appeal to the Jews to embrace Christianity.²³ He had previously expressed his conviction that heresy could not be prevented by force. God's Word alone must strive against it. "We learn it also from experience, for although all the Jews and heretics were burned, yet no one has been or will be convinced and converted thereby. . . ." ²⁴ Lewin is unwilling to credit Luther with proposing mild measures for dealing with heretics on his own initiative — he was merely promulgating sentiments which were already commonplace in Germany. But there is no proof that Luther would not have embarked on the course he pursued regardless of current attitudes. In an independent manner he was prepared to use winsome tactics. Undeniably his hopes ran high at this time. If the Christian faith should be presented to the Jews in its true light, he was confident that many of them would quickly recognize their errors and espouse the evangelical cause.

Luther states quite clearly the objective he had in mind when he wrote this treatise: "I shall from the Scripture mention the reasons which have moved me to believe that Christ was a Jew, born of a virgin, and perhaps I can also induce some of the Jews to believe in Christ."

The Jews can be censured too severely for their unbelief:

Our fools, the Popes, bishops, sophists, and monks, these uncouth jackasses (mule heads) have in the past so dealt with the Jews that whoever was a good Christian had just as well wished himself to be a Jew. And if I had been a Jew and had seen how these blockheads and dunces were controlling and teaching the Christian faith, I would rather have become a hog (sow) than a Christian.²⁵

Romanists have treated the Jews like dogs. They have been content with an *ex opere operato* performance of the sacramental

²¹ W. A., VII, p. 606 f. But Lewin insists: "Luther entwirft hiermit ein vollkommen neues Programm." *Op. cit.*, p. 23.

²² W. A., XI, S. L. A., XX:1792—1821. The argumentation on the fulfillment of prophecy appears to be derived from the *Postille* of Nicholas von Lyra.

²³ Lewin calls it a "Missionsschrift," *op. cit.*, p. 30.

²⁴ March, 1523, in *Von Weltlicher Oberkeit*, W. A., XI, p. 229 f.

²⁵ S. L. A., XX:1794.

rites. Indoctrination has been neglected. No wonder that the Jews find more vindication for Judaism in the Scriptures than for Christianity! Pious baptized Jews had assured Luther that they would never have accepted Christianity if they had not heard the Gospel as he presented it. Luther admonishes the Gentiles to treat the Jews sympathetically. If anyone has a right to boast of their heritage, the Jews are those people because they can claim blood relationship with our Lord. If the papists are weary of deriding him as a heretic, Luther suggests that they start chiding him as a Jew.

In the past, Luther concluded, the Jews had been proffered only a perverted version of Christianity. He is optimistic about a more favorable response when they are privileged to hear the pure Gospel. Every orthodox Jew cherishes the Old Testament. With this in mind, Luther plans an approach designed to persuade the Jews that what was predicted by the Prophets found an accurate fulfillment in the New Testament. One by one he takes up what he understands as Old Testament references to Christ. Gen. 3:15 already pointed to the Virgin Birth. Abraham's seed will be a blessing to future generations (Gen. 22:18) because the Messiah will be numbered among his descendants. 2 Sam. 7:12-14 does not refer to Solomon, but to Christ. With unmistakable clarity, Isaiah 7:14 directly foretells the Virgin Birth. In answer to the Jewish assertion that the Hebrew word *alma* may mean any young woman, married or unmarried, Luther insists that it is restricted in meaning to an unblemished virgin. *Alma* and *bethula* are interchangeable synonyms, but *alma* is better suited for the connection in which it is used here. The counterproposal adduced by the Jews that the sign spoken of consisted in the birth of a son rather than a daughter, Luther dismisses as "shameful and childish." Why would it be an extraordinary sign for a young wife to give birth to a son instead of a daughter? The Jews are foolish, too, when they object to the Virgin Birth on rational grounds. Anything is possible for God, who created all things out of nothing. Not only does Luther defend the virgin birth of Christ, but he contends vehemently against those who would abolish the *perpetua virgo* concept of Mother Mary. The suspicion that Mary ever had children in a natural manner tramples on the sanctity of her honored position as the mother of God. In this respect Luther was still a good Roman Catholic.

In considerable detail, Luther takes up Gen. 49:10-12, maintaining that *Shilo* should be identified with the Messiah. This prophecy cannot refer to the Babylonian Captivity. At the same time it must have been fulfilled before the destruction of Jerusalem. Shilo must be a natural man who dies and yet rules eternally. Only Christ can fill this description. In Daniel 9:24 ff. the angel Gabriel makes a plain reference to Christ.

Luther's endeavor to win the Jews admits of no doctrinal compromise. He expects to shatter their false Messianic dreams

with incontrovertible exegesis. He has no doubts about the soundness of his chain of reasoning.

But Luther is willing to exercise patience. The Jews should first be introduced to the human Jesus before being required to accept the deity of Christ.²⁶ He advises a tactful approach and expresses contempt for the unfounded suspicions of Christians. He excuses their practice of usury. They are denied equal opportunity in lawful occupations.

Luther's work on the Jews was widely read. Within about eight months it went through not less than nine reprints. Justus Jonas translated it into Latin and commended it highly in a letter to Andreas Rem.²⁷ Previously the Jews have been misled by their Talmud. Under the tutelage of the Great Reformer some of them will come to Christ.

Walther asserts that other writers on the Jewish question began to share his friendly, optimistic outlook.²⁸ In 1537 Luther could write to Josel von Rosheim: "My writing has served the welfare of the whole of Jewry."²⁹ That there was some truth in Luther's declaration seems to be substantiated by the sudden cessation of persecutions. The Jews had been driven out of Nuremberg in 1498, Noerdlingen in 1506, Regensburg in 1519, and Rottenburg in 1520. Not until about 1536 was there a fresh outburst of violence against the Jews. Even the Jewish historian Graetz must confess that Luther's favorable writing on the Jews contained "words which they had not heard for a thousand years."³⁰

Luther sent a copy of *Dass Jesus Christus ein geborner Jude sei* to the converted Jew Bernhard,³¹ with the wish that it would strengthen his own faith and might help him in convincing his earlier *Glaubensgenossen* to become Christians. In his letter Luther reveals that some individuals had expressed their doubts about the genuineness of Jewish conversions, but Luther preferred to believe that they relapsed into Judaism out of gross ignorance, not out of obduracy. Their experience with Christians had been limited to the papists and monks who had set a lamentable example with their hypocrisy and immorality. What a false impression they had gained! Now that the golden light of the Gospel had started to shine in Europe, it was likely that many

²⁶ In a sermon of Feb. 14, 1524, Luther says that if a Jew comes to him who is not stubborn and whom he wants to bring to Christ, he would not begin by telling him that Christ is God's Son. He would first instill in him a love for the Lord Jesus, telling him that He was a man sent by God. Later he would follow up and explain that Christ was God. W. A., XV, p. 447.

²⁷ S. L. A., XX:1822, No. 48 b.

²⁸ *Luther, die Juden, und die Antisemiten*, p. 17.

²⁹ S. L. A., XX:1826 ff., No. 49.

³⁰ *History of the Jews*, Vol. IV, p. 471.

³¹ Formerly, Rabbi Jakob Gipher, who married a daughter of Carlstadt and supported himself by teaching Hebrew.

more from Abraham's seed would follow in the footsteps of Bernhard.³²

Lewin intimates that Luther was not prompted solely by unselfish motives in his effort to win the Jews. A personal ambition to prove the truth of his teaching by doing what the Romanists had been unable to do — triumph over the synagog — dictated his actions during this period.³³ He was blinded by an unbounded enthusiasm to convert the Jewish people en masse to Christianity.³⁴ But all this is demonstrably untenable. Nowhere does he make sweeping statements that would justify Lewin's deduction. It is an exaggeration to claim that he became such an elated visionary that he expected the new religion suddenly to supplant Judaism. His expectations were on a more moderate level.

But it is true that his ardor for the Jewish cause was gradually dampened by subsequent disappointments. We cannot agree that his change in attitude was due to a frustrated ambition or a vitriolic old age, but disillusioned he became. Instead of many conversions, there were few. Instead of responding to his appeals, the Jews were encouraged to become more vociferous in proclaiming their own faith. Messianic expectations were aroused. Luther was hailed as Messiah's forerunner. The revival of Hebrew learning among Christian scholars was interpreted as another sign of the coming glory of Israel.

Luther's theological development after 1523 accentuated the breach with Rome. By research and from experience the Reformer was confirmed in his convictions. Doctrinal formulations began to crystallize in his mind. His enemies had abandoned the pristine purity of the Apostolic Church and contaminated it with human innovations and traditions. Luther was fighting against a spiritual tyranny which perpetuated itself through a system of sacerdotalism and sacramentalism. The priesthood of all believers with direct access to God and the sole authority of Scripture with the Pauline emphasis on justification by faith alone were the fundamental tenets of the Lutheran theologians. No compromise on these points was admissible.

Reprehensible as the papists were, Luther was slowly impressed by the thought that the Jews were even worse. They denied Christ altogether. More and more Luther classified Jews with heathen and Turks.³⁵ He seemed to discover considerable

³² S. L. A., XX:1822, No. 48 c.

³³ *Luthers Stellung zu den Juden*, pp. 34—35.

³⁴ Cf. Newman, *op. cit.*, pp. 620—621. Luther is compared to St. Paul, who is depicted as a philo-Semite, who became disillusioned, and then vehemently opposed the Jews. Luther is supposed to have followed the tactics of Mohammed, who first gratefully acknowledged the value of Jewish literature, but became infuriated when they refused to acclaim Allah and Mohammed, his prophet.

³⁵ E.g., *Concerning the Handbook Against the Peasants*, W. A., XVIII, pp. 384—401; *A Reply to the Twelve Articles*, W. A., XVII, p. 291 ff. Cf. Hol. Ed., IV.

similarity between all his foes. Unbelief was their common ailment. Their proud reason refused to bend before the inexplicable mysteries of God. Denouncing the Catholic teaching on penance, he writes: "How does this faith differ from the faith of Turks and heathen and Jews? All of them, too, would make satisfaction by their works. . . ." ³⁶

Intensive Biblical studies after 1523 forced Luther to study the commentaries of the rabbis. Partly he used the sources. Often he found it convenient to resort to the studies made by other Christians.³⁷ One of his favorite authorities was Antonius Margaritha, the son of a rabbi at Regensburg and the first professor of Hebrew in Vienna. Luther found his book *The Entire Jewish Faith* (1530) particularly valuable.³⁸ Additional material for his later accusations against the Jews was supplied by the Jewish apostate Paul of Burgos (1350—1435) in his *Perfidy of the Jews*. The Altenburg preacher Wenceslaus Linck issued a translation of the Epistle of Rabbi Samuel of Morocco, supposed to have been written about 1100.³⁹ Also in the Reformer's hands were the *Victoria adversus impios Hebraeos* by Salvagus Porchetus, perhaps the *Fugio Fidei* by Raymund Martinus, and the works of a number of rabbis, especially of Samuel Raschi.⁴⁰

The consequences of Luther's advance in learning and experience on the Jewish question were largely negative. He read several of the prayers in their Hebrew books and was repelled by their arrogance and presumption.⁴¹ He concludes that the good will he has shown the Jews has only strengthened them in their errors and made them more malicious. They have shamefully abused his friendly overtures.⁴² In the light of more mature knowledge he later wrote:

What we have permitted up to now out of ignorance (I had not known it myself) God will forgive us. Now, however, we are aware of the facts; and if we defend and protect the Jews in spite of it, that would be the same as if we did it ourselves.⁴³

Luther had taken a definite stand against the punishment of

³⁶ In *Exhortation to the Clergy at Augsburg* (1530), Hol. Ed., Vol. IV, p. 341; cf. p. 356. Cf. W. A., XXX, p. 288 ff.

³⁷ Walther, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

³⁸ A systematic argumentation against Jews consisting of three parts: (1) an exposition of the Jewish faith with a description of their ceremonies and festivals; (2) a disclosure of their avidity for usury, their enmity against Christianity, and their hatred of government; and (3) a refutation of their Messianic hopes. Cf. Geiger, *Die Juden und die deutsche Literatur*, p. 325.

³⁹ Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 627.

⁴⁰ Reu, *Luther and the Jews*, p. 595.

⁴¹ E. A., LXII, p. 366.

⁴² Cf. E. A., LV, p. 186 f.

⁴³ In *Von den Juden und ihren Luegen*, S. L. A., XX:1990, 299; E. A., XXXII, p. 234.

heretics.⁴⁴ "Faith is free. What could a heresy trial do? No more than make people agree by mouth or in writing; it could not compel the heart."⁴⁵ In an effort to prevent the outbreak of the Peasants' Revolt (1525) he wrote: "Indeed no ruler ought to prevent anyone from teaching or believing what he pleases, whether Gospel or lies. It is enough if he prevents the teaching of sedition and rebellion."⁴⁶ Gradually Luther began to justify persecution on the basis of a distinction between heresy and blasphemy. Blasphemy he defined as a denial of the divinity of Christ or any manifest article of faith, clearly grounded in Scripture and generally accepted throughout Christendom.

As a rule, he was more mild than his contemporaries in the punishments he advocated. In an exposition of Psalm 82, written in 1530, Luther discusses the obligations of princes and appends the question: "Shall rulers put down heresy?" Rebels against constituted authority should be promptly and severely punished because they are in the same class with thieves and murderers. False teachers cannot be tolerated if they make propaganda for their dangerous beliefs, because they are in the same class with those who curse God and slander their neighbor.

By this procedure no one is compelled to believe, for he can still believe what he will; but he is forbidden to teach and blaspheme. For, by so doing, he would take from God and the Christians their doctrine and word, and he would do them this injury under their own protection. . . . Let him go some place where there are no Christians. . . .

Luther is not thinking primarily of the Jews, because he is preoccupied with controversies involving the Romanists and the Anabaptists, but he adds:

Someone, however, may enter the further objection: "We ought not to punish these blasphemers or prevent them, because we tolerate the Jews, who blaspheme the Lord Christ and His mother, with all the saints and all Christians, both in their teaching and their speaking." Answer: They have their punishment for this in that they are outside the Church and cannot hold any public office; and even as it is, they are not allowed to utter this blasphemy publicly. Much less are they permitted to attempt preaching in corners, as do these poisonous sneaks, who are not willing to cast the poison of their blasphemy upon any except those who are baptized and are called Christians. Moreover, they are not willing to be considered useless by the world, like the Jews, but . . . if they were to go . . . where, like the Jews, they would be heard by no one, then we would let them blaspheme to the stones and trees in some forest or possibly in the depths of the sea or in a hot oven.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ "The burning of heretics is contrary to the will of the Holy Spirit," in *Argument in Defense of the Articles of Martin Luther*, Hol. Ed., Vol. III, pp. 103 ff. Cf. W. A., I, p. 624; VII, 309 ff.

⁴⁵ Quoted by Smith, P., *The Age of the Reformation*, p. 643.

⁴⁶ *Admonition to Peace: An Answer to the Twelve Articles*, Hol. Ed., Vol. IV, p. 224. Cf. W. A., XVIII, p. 291 ff.

⁴⁷ W. A., XXX, Part I, 212.

Luther still does not advocate harsh treatment of the Jews, but he has a low estimate of their role as outsiders in the community. As long as they follow their religion quietly and do not rival Christianity with claims of equality or superiority, he will be lenient.

At first Luther was overjoyed to hear of the readiness of some Jews to be baptized. He was shocked when he discovered that many took the step "um eigenen Nutzens willen" rather than out of a desire for salvation. In the summer of 1530, when Pastor Genesius of Ichttershausen asked Luther in what form he should administer Baptism to a Jewish girl, his response is indicative of his undiminished interest in the conversion of the Jews, but he has become increasingly skeptical. He advises his follower to exert caution until he ascertains that the girl is not feigning faith in Christ.

These people play the hypocrite in a faithless way. I do not doubt that there are still children of Abraham who belong to Christ. But up until now the Jews have frequently made a mockery of our faith. Warn the poor, therefore, that they do not deceive them. But if they are genuine, then I wish them grace and perseverance. Extend to them my greeting in Christ, and tell them that I am ready to serve them in love.⁴⁸

Sometime during this period Luther made his oft-quoted statement about leading a pious Jew to the Elbe bridge, hanging a stone around his neck, and throwing him down with the words: "I baptize you in the name of Abraham."⁴⁹ It would be presumptuous to infer too much from a remark which was probably spoken in a jocular vein at the table.

Many Jews who traveled through Wittenberg enjoyed Luther's hospitality. On one occasion three stayed over to discuss Jer. 23:6, which for Luther proved the deity of Christ. What disgusted Luther most was their unwillingness to let the Scriptures interpret themselves. They insisted that they were obliged to cling to their rabbis as authorities just as Christians respected the authority of the Pope.⁵⁰ They expressed the hope that Christians, through their study of Hebrew literature, would recognize the truth of Judaism.⁵¹ When Luther gave them "Empfehlungsbriefe," they were offended because he wrote: "Man moege ihnen 'um Christenwillen' [sic] foerderlich sein."⁵²

⁴⁸ Enders, *op. cit.*, 8, 92. So often did the Jews carry on this deception that Luther many times in his sermons carefully examined the question whether their Baptisms were valid. When a Jew again desired Baptism from Luther, he answered: "If you are sincere, we will gladly admit you to our church service. I am kindly disposed toward all Jews for the sake of one pious Jew, who was born from your race. But you rarely remain faithful." Walther, *op. cit.*, p. 19, quoting Mathesius, 343.

⁴⁹ Lewin, *op. cit.*, p. 37. The reference is from the *Tischreden*, which makes it of dubious import.

⁵⁰ Cf. W. A., XX, p. 569 f.

⁵¹ Cf. E. A., XXXII, p. 156.

⁵² Cf. Walther, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

Luther was shamefully deceived by a Jew for whom he collected alms.⁵³ Frequent warnings told him about the plots of Jews who were intending to poison him. Lewin implies that much of his information came from "eifrige Zutraeger," who were unreliable Jew baiters. In 1535 a pregnant woman came to Luther with her problem but concealed her real name. He was deeply stirred when he later learned that she was the sister of a friend and had been seduced by a Jew.⁵⁴ Luther does not mention any of these occurrences in his sharp writings against the Jews, but they undoubtedly colored his opinions. He was beginning to delineate the Jewish character in terms of "Unwahrhaftigkeit und Geldgier."

Luther never hoped for a mass conversion of the Jews, as Lewin tries to prove. Walther is more accurate when he writes: "Nie hat Luther mehr gehofft, als dasz sich 'etliche,' vielleicht im Vergleich zu frueher 'viele,' aber im Vergleich zu der Masse der Juden nur 'wenige,' zu Christus bekehren wuerden."⁵⁵ And this hope was at least partially fulfilled. Disappointment was not the decisive cause for Luther's change in attitude.

More basic were the tensions created by religious controversy. Luther had anticipated considerable success among the Jews by employing arguments found in the Old Testament, their own sacred canon. To his surprise he found that they adhered more closely to the Talmud and their traditions.⁵⁶ When he studied the rabbinical literature, he was repelled by their haughty self-assurance. He began to write in a satirical tone about their arrogance, which was so incongruous with their wretched state. What incensed him a great deal was that they dared to elevate themselves above all Christians, scorning the Gentiles for their ignoble birth.⁵⁷

Worst of all, the Jews spoke disdainfully of what Luther held most inviolable. Tolerated as strangers in Christian communities, they had the impudence to mock and curse the holiest thing among Christians. They reviled Christ as a magician and an instrument of the devil. They called Him a bastard, and His mother Mary a prostitute who had illegal intercourse with a smith. As *Hebel Vorik* Christ was the personification of falsehood. They took a heinous delight in contemplating His crucifixion, calling Him *Thola* (hung one).⁵⁸ Luther suspected that the Jews wrote even worse things about Christians than he had read. He knew that they spread the most vicious blasphemies imaginable about the Savior.

⁵³ Cf. Enders, *op. cit.*, X, p. 247

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, X, p. 186; 198 ff.; 208.

⁵⁵ *Luther, die Juden, und die Antisemiten*, p. 20.

⁵⁶ Cf. E. A., XXXII, 258: "Sie sagen, sie muessten ihren Rabbinen glauben, wenn dieselben gleich sagten, die rechte Hand waere die linke."

⁵⁷ Cf. E. A., XXXII, 129: "Und ist des Ruehmens von Gebluet und leiblicher Geburt von den Vaetern kein Mass noch Ende."

⁵⁸ Cf. W. A., XXVI, p. 171.

No people, he discovered, were more avaricious than the Jews. Christians are warned against the practice of usury, but Jews are encouraged to engage in it. "Deservedly are these robbers driven into banishment on account of their impenitence and their usury,"⁵⁹ he exclaimed at the table in 1536.

Jews also demoralized the Christian community by fostering superstitions. Already at the time of the church visitations in Electoral Saxony, Luther was astounded at the number of books found with magical Jewish symbols among the village pastors. He was afraid that alchemy and other false arts were being used to swindle the plain, gullible Christians.⁶⁰ Joachim II of Brandenburg was warned by Luther when he trusted in a group of Jews who wanted to teach him how to make money. The admonition was in vain, but proved to be in place. After a while the Elector discovered that the Jews had deceived him, but it was too late. They fled, and only one was apprehended.⁶¹

Two fundamental errors in Judaism which repeatedly evoke vigorous criticism from the pen of the Reformer are their system of work-righteousness and their expectation of a worldly Messiah. They hold rigorously to their outmoded Law and lack love and evangelical freedom. But some Jews will be saved in fulfillment of God's promise.⁶² Luther's change in feeling was not strong enough to require any restatement of his position. There is still an underlying consistency in his whole outlook.

The exegetical method applied by Hebrew commentators disgusted Luther. He rejects a grammatical appraisal of the text according to stringent rules. To learn a language, you should become acquainted with its usage. To grasp the sense of a passage is the key to correct interpretation, not to be bound by the words, which are but a channel for the flow of ideas. The errors of Christian scholars, like Augustine, were caused by the misleading literature of the Jews. At times he had been unduly swayed by their opinions himself, and he is annoyed because he must now retract exegesis which he had written earlier. They twist and pervert the meaning of the Scriptures to suit their own preconceived notions. They approach it with a prejudiced mind, ignoring the natural implications of Messianic prophecies. For them everything must have a physical sense; so they fail to catch the spiritual significance of what they read. They are blinded by the oral and written traditions of their earlier teachers. Until they view the Old Testament in the light of the New Covenant, they

⁵⁹ Quoted by MacKinnon, *Luther and the Reformation*, Vol. IV, page 195.

⁶⁰ Cf. Walther, *op. cit.*, pp. 23—26.

⁶¹ Cf. Enders, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 192 f., 217. Lewin conveniently omits mention of the accurate advice which Luther gave. (*Op. cit.*, p. 104 f.)

⁶² Cf. W. A., XIII, pp. 84, 576 f.; XXV, 303; XXVII, 13; XXXII, 208, 239.

cannot, and they will not, understand it. Paul says that the veil of Moses remains over the Bible for anyone who denies Christ.⁶³

Luther takes the Jewish punctuators severely to task for attempting to remove from prophecy the prediction of the divinity of the coming Messiah.⁶⁴ Concerning their interpretation of Ps. 2:7 he complains: "Whether the Jews are so exceedingly wicked that they distort such passages or ignore them is beside the question. Their objections are nothing but their own imagination, without any Scriptural warrant, invented for the purpose of evasion."⁶⁵

Grisar sees an additional factor contributing toward Luther's growing hostility in that he resented criticisms of his Old Testament translation.⁶⁶ Sebastian Muenster said that it could be improved upon by a more accurate understanding of the original text. As a pupil of Elias Levita, he prepared his own Latin translation of the Hebrew Bible in 1534, with annotations from the rabbinical commentaries. Luther appreciated his scholarship, but criticized his "Judaizing" tendencies. He became so critical of Jewish scholarship that he urged Christian students to specialize in the study of Hebrew so that more Christ-centered interpretations of the Old Testament would be available.⁶⁷

A careful study of Luther's attitude toward the Jews up to 1536 will persuade the honest investigator of the erroneousness and inaccuracy of bluntly and unreservedly describing him as either "hopelessly prejudiced by medieval superstitions" or as "the herald of modern anti-Semitism." Neither is true. Luther was first and foremost a theologian who never questioned the foundations of his faith. To place Judaism on the same pedestal with the teachings of the Christ he loved so dearly was utterly unthinkable. A brotherhood of Christians and Jews based on mutual toleration would have appeared ridiculous to him or anyone else in the sixteenth century. Hoping for the conversion of many Jews at the outset of his career, he experienced disappointments and gradually shifted from the offensive to the defensive. By 1536 we find that he was already less concerned about making Jews Christians and more concerned about safeguarding Christians from Jews.

The next and final installment will dwell on Luther's later attitude toward the Jews and present a summary.

Vermillion, S. Dak.

⁶³ Cf. *Preface to the Prophet Ezekiel*, Hol. Ed., Vol. VI, p. 412; W. A., XIV, 174 ff.; XXV, 87 f.

⁶⁴ Cf. Reu, *Luther and the Scriptures*, p. 104.

⁶⁵ W. A., L, 28.

⁶⁶ *Luther*, Vol. III, p. 348.

⁶⁷ Cf. S. L. A., XX, *Vom Schem Hamphoras*, 2029 ff.; E. A., 32, 356—358.

Theological Observer

Lutheran Editors Demand Church Unity "Without Delay."—

A demand that the Lutheran Church in America face the question of unity "without delay and without excuse" was voiced by the National Lutheran Editors' Association at the closing session of its thirty-sixth annual convention in Rock Island, Ill. In a resolution, unanimously adopted, the editors warned that the world is standing at one of the fateful crossroads of history, with "secular movements and human governments challenging the place and authority of the Church and seeking to restrict its activities and influence." "The times call more urgently than ever for the unity of the Lutheran church bodies in America," they said. Such unity of effort, the editors said, would not only help to solve the problem of the rural church in this country, but would also be "a most effective means of succoring and rebuilding world Lutheranism." Specifically, the editors recommended formation of a federation of all Lutheran bodies in America as a preliminary step toward ultimate organic unity. Strengthening of the National Lutheran Council as the functional arm of the Church also was advocated, as well as the creation of city, regional, and State councils to promote co-operation on parish and wider levels. "We are convinced," the resolution concluded, "that it is part of the inescapable stewardship of the whole Lutheran Church in America to face this problem of Lutheran unity without delay and without excuse, working toward closer and more fruitful unity while it is day before the night cometh when no man can work."

So runs the report of R. N. S. Of course, all loyal Lutherans sigh and groan for Lutheran unity. How can it be brought about without sacrifice of the truth and unfaithfulness toward our heavenly Master?—that is the question. A.

Growth of the Lutheran Church in America.—The National Lutheran Council Bulletin has published figures which indicate that Lutheranism has made immense strides forward in the United States and Canada during the last years. The Bulletin says: "During 1947 the baptized membership of the Lutheran churches of the United States and Canada increased by 163,485. This figure represents a 2.9 per cent net gain over the membership of 1946. The total baptized membership of the Lutheran churches at the end of 1947 was 5,836,147. The confirmed membership during 1947 increased by 126,158 persons to a grand total of 4,067,279. This increase represents a gain of 3.2 per cent as compared with the increase of 63,464 members, or 1.6 per cent, in 1946. These figures are based on the annual statistical summary compiled by the Division of Public Relations of the National Lutheran Council. . . . The American Lutheran Church, the fourth largest Lutheran body in America, reported an increase of 22,608 in its baptized membership, or 3.4 per cent gain over 1946. For the third straight year

the highest numerical increase was made by The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, with a gain of 51,190 baptized members, or 3.4 per cent over 1946. Among the major bodies the Evangelical Lutheran Church gain showed the greatest advance on a percentage basis, its increase of 33,828 baptized members representing a gain of 4.8 per cent. The United Lutheran Church, largest of the bodies, reported an increase of 41,355, or 2.2 per cent. The baptized membership of the five largest Lutheran Synods was reported as follows: United Lutheran Church, 1,886,397; Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, 1,567,558; Evangelical Lutheran Church, 734,502; American Lutheran Church, 669,308; Augustana Lutheran Church, 427,997." A.

Luther's View of the Real Presence. — In the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* of July, 1948, Dr. C. B. Gohdes, professor emeritus of Capital University, Columbus, Ohio, publishes an article having the title "The Real Presence in the Sacrament." He points out that the expression "in, with, and under," with which every Lutheran is familiar, comes from Luther himself. Then he dwells on a controversy of the eleventh century between Pope Nicholas II and Bishop Berengarius of Tours, in which the subject of debate was the real presence. Berengarius rejected the transubstantiation teaching which had entered the Church. The Pope, however, compelled him to retract. In his retraction he stated that he accepted the teaching of the Roman See to the effect "that the bread and wine reposing on the altar, after consecration, are not only a sacrament, but also the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ and are physically, not only in the sacrament, but in reality, handled and broken by the priests and chewed with the teeth (*dentibus atteri*).” When Luther wrote on the question of the Sacrament in 1527, he sided with Pope Nicholas II. At that time, as Dr. Gohdes says, Luther wrote (Weimar Edition, XXVI, p. 241): "For this reason the fanatics and likewise the Commentary on Canon Law do wrong to Pope Nicholas II for compelling Berengarius to confess that he crushes and masticates with his teeth the true body of Christ. Would to God that all popes had acted in a way so Christian as this pope dealt with Berengarius! For the fact is that whosoever eats and chews this bread eats and chews the real and true body of Christ, and not just mere bread, as is taught by Wyclif. For this bread is the body of Christ, just as the dove is the Holy Spirit and the flame the angel." Dr. Gohdes gives Luther full credit for breaking with the "ancient error of transubstantiation." He likewise praises him for opposing Zwingli, "who emptied the sacrament of its spiritual content by teaching that the elements upon the altar are merely representative of the earthly elements instead of being channels of faith." At the same time Dr. Gohdes does not wish to overlook the services that Zwingli rendered the cause of the Reformation in Switzerland. Continuing, he says: "As for Luther, he never abandoned his ideas of capernaitic eating and drinking and of consubstantiation as the frame of reference in

which to house the truth he found in Scripture — the presence of Christ in the sacrament." He maintains that when Melancthon in 1532 "was about to travel to Kassel in Hesse to meet Bucer there in conference, Luther took leave of his co-laborer with the instruction that in the Holy Supper the body of Christ is really eaten in and with the bread, 'so that all which the bread does and undergoes is also done and undergone by the body of Christ, in that, with the bread, the latter is distributed, eaten and chewed with the teeth.'" Luther, so it is pointed out by the author, tolerated the view of the South German cities that believed in the Real Presence without accepting the terminology of Luther. When the Wittenberg Concord was signed, he was willing to declare fellowship with Bucer and his associates on their profession of the Real Presence, although they did not endorse every statement that Luther had made. Professor Gohdes quotes this statement of Luther from the Marburg Colloquy: "This spiritual food exists for the very purpose that, when eaten, a man's flesh digests it, whereby it is changed, becomes spiritual, and becomes a partaker of eternal life and blessedness." His authority for that statement is Hausrath, Volume III, p. 223. Dr. Gohdes definitely is of the opinion that Luther taught consubstantiation, which, he says, is an un-Biblical, untenable error. He admits that in the Formula of Concord the idea of consubstantiation and Capernaitic eating is rejected. He regrets that the Confession retains the phrase "in, with, and under." He thinks that the reference to the *manducatio oralis* in the Formula of Concord is "inconsistent and infelicitous." "*Manducatio oralis*," he says, was merely another term for "chewing with the teeth." On the question what the present attitude of the Lutheran ministry is toward the problem of the Real Presence, Dr. Gohdes writes: "Their simplified reasoning is this: We need the indwelling of Christ, the feeding of all who hunger and thirst after righteousness with the bread of life. Through the sacrament He supplies the soul's hunger with Himself. Thus, what the synoptics and St. Paul teach regarding the Holy Supper falls into line with what St. John says regarding eating of Christ's flesh (chapter 6). We need Christ as the constant Guest in the mansion of the soul. The sacrament is one way for Him to enter it, to bless those right with God, to judge the frivolous who dare Him to come, but lack the faith to receive Him, in either case, He is there! Such has been for decades the teaching of eminent theologians, as the Upsala professor Brilioth; the Danish theologian Martensen; the brilliant Rudolf Otto and others. Unable to digest the massive theories propounded centuries ago, the Lutheran ministry of today all but unconsciously drift away from speculation to the fundamental Scriptural fact, experienced by thousands of Christians in heartache and heartbreak, that the 'body and blood' received through the sacrament is the Lord Jesus Himself in His power." Dr. Gohdes maintains that Luther himself taught this view in 1519, when he wrote: "The gift of the Holy Supper is communion, an inner union with Christ and His members, which grows out

of faith in His benefits and the forgiveness of sins." Luther, says Dr. Gohdes, was certain that Christ Himself is present in the Holy Communion, "But how and where, leave that to His care!" Finally, Dr. Gohdes says that body and blood are simply a Hebrew idiom for person. To substantiate this view he quotes Matt. 16:17; 1 Cor. 1:29; 1 Cor. 15:50, and Gal. 1:16.

Thus the whole issue of the Real Presence is once more placed before the Church. Our immediate interest is in the question whether Luther was guilty of holding Capernaitic views with respect to the Lord's Supper. We do not doubt that the quotations that are submitted are correct. But we maintain that the conclusion drawn from them is not justified. When the important writings of Luther on the Lord's Supper are studied, one sees that he does not adhere to such carnal views of the eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood. It is true that he is vehement and even violent in his rejection of the view of Zwingli and of other rationalists. With all the force at his disposal he insists on the real presence of Christ's body and blood. But there are numerous passages in his writings which can be quoted to show that a person is not justified in accusing him of Capernaitic ideas with respect to the Real Presence. In our opinion it is not difficult to harmonize the various statements of Luther. Let each one be considered in its context, and then it will become apparent that the driving force behind all of his remarks on the Lord's Supper is the conviction that Christ's body and blood are really present. To ward off a Zwinglian understanding of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, he was not afraid of using expressions which we today may call unfortunate, but which should be understood in the light of his chief objective.

A.

The "Lutheran World Review."—The Lutheran World Federation decided last summer to publish a quarterly to serve as a medium for the expression and discussion of convictions and concerns which are common to Lutherans throughout the world. The first issue of the *Lutheran World Review*, just published, contains an article by Anders Nygren, the president of the Lutheran World Federation, "The Task of the Lutheran Church in a New Day." Prof. W. Trillhaas reviews "Theology in Germany during the Last Decade"; and T. A. Kantonen, "Recent Lutheran Theology in America." Bishop E. Berggrav describes the "Experiences of the Norwegian Church in the War," and Prof. Paul Hoh discusses "Evangelism." The English edition is published by the Muhlenberg Press in Philadelphia, and the German edition, identical with the English in content, is published by the *Evangelisches Verlagswerk* in Stuttgart. Professor Theodore G. Tappert is editor, Dr. S. C. Michelfelder, managing editor; subscription price is \$1.00.

F. E. M.

Convention of the A. L. C.—Of special interest to the readers of our journal are the resolutions pertaining to Christian unity

passed at the recent A. L. C. convention held in Fremont, Ohio. We reprint them here.

"WHEREAS, We are committed to the ultimate unity of all Lutherans in America as God's will for us; and

"WHEREAS, We are hopeful that much progress can be made in the immediate future toward realization of this ideal, in view of the fact that several bodies, namely, the United Lutheran Church in America, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Augustana Lutheran Church, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, have recently adopted resolutions looking toward closer affiliation with other Lutheran synods; and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, at its 1947 convention voted the reappointment of a Committee on Doctrinal Unity to continue negotiations with our Committee on Fellowship; and

"WHEREAS, We are desirous to make our full contribution to the attainment of Lutheran unity; therefore be it

"Resolved

"1. That we reaffirm our position on 'Selective Fellowship' (cf. *Minutes*, 1946, Appleton, Wis.) expressing our gratitude and joy over the measure of fellowship that has already been attained with respect to both the United Lutheran Church in America and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

"2. That we pledge our vigorous co-operation in the expanding program of activity of the National Lutheran Council, looking to the day when all Lutheran Church bodies will hold membership in the National Lutheran Council.

"3. That we continue a Committee on Fellowship to be appointed by the president of the Church to negotiate with a Committee on Doctrinal Unity of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, toward the establishment of pulpit and altar fellowship or of fellowship commensurate with the existing degree of unity.

"4. That this committee together with the Executive Committee of the Church be instructed to explore the possibilities of merger with interested bodies within the American Lutheran Conference and report its progress at the next meeting of the Church.

"5. That we empower this committee together with the Executive Committee of the Church to receive and consider resolutions which may emanate from the United Lutheran Church in America now in convention assembled at Philadelphia and to discuss with any and all Lutheran church bodies possible approaches and methods to attain fuller unity and closer affiliation."

The Missouri Synod moves slowly and cautiously in this whole matter. This characteristic of our Church should not be ascribed to a lack of interest in Lutheran unity, but to the desire, on the one hand, to remain faithful to everything the Scriptures say on adherence to the full truth of God's revelation and, on the other, to continue in possession of the great doctrinal treasures with

which God has blessed our body. Our prayer is that the negotiations which will continue will not be without blessing and, if God wills it, will finally bring about the establishment of pulpit and altar fellowship.

From the account on the convention in the *Lutheran Standard* of Nov. 6 we take over a paragraph which draws attention to another important point. "Grateful note was taken of the growing interest in establishing more Christian day schools. The General President was authorized to ask the Day School Teachers Association to send a representative (as an advisory delegate) to the next convention of the Church. Attention was called to the fact that our Board of Parish Education has prepared two fine manuals, *Establishing a Christian Day School* and *Establishing a Christian Kindergarten*. The basic material of both of these manuals is to be included in the projected *Parish Education Handbook*." A.

The Bicentennial Convention of the U. L. C. A. in Philadelphia.

—It was two hundred years ago this year that Henry Melchior Muehlenberg founded the first American Lutheran Synod. Since he worked chiefly in Philadelphia and vicinity, it was proper that the U. L. C. A., one of whose constituent synods is the Pennsylvania Ministerium, founded two hundred years ago, should meet in that city. From the report in the *Lutheran* we cull items that are of special interest to our readers. Perhaps of prime importance is the resolution of the U. L. C. A. declaring its willingness to enter a merger with the other Lutheran synods that are represented in the National Lutheran Council. The U. L. C. A. is willing either to form an organic union with these other Lutheran churches or to take steps that will lead thereto. In other words, complete merger is not insisted on. If the other church bodies in question prefer a federation, the U. L. C. A. will give its consent. The resolution of which we are speaking reads: "In the conviction that this is God's aid for Lutheran union in America, in glad response to many voices that are being raised among Lutherans in America proposing constructive action toward that goal, and in order to present to a troubled world a more nearly united front for Christ in the proclamation of the Gospel, the United Lutheran Church in America hereby declares to all the bodies now constituting the National Lutheran Council its desire to merge with all or any of them in organic union, and hereby instructs its Special Commission on Relations to American Lutheran Church Bodies to meet with similarly empowered commissions of these bodies to confer upon and negotiate organic union or steps leading thereto and authorizes its Commission to participate in drafting a constitution and devising such organizational procedures as may seem wise in effecting such union, this Commission to report its findings to the United Lutheran Church in America for consideration and final action." It should be added here that the U. L. C. A., as far as we know, never did hesitate to express its desire to unite with other Lutheran bodies. The hesitancy was shown on the other

side, the U. L. C. A. being considered a liberal body, whose Lutheranism was not of as sturdy a kind as was required. Dr. Russell Snyder of the seminary at Mount Airy, vice-president of the board that has to do with publications, reported that the board in the past biennium surpassed any previous period of two years in the number and variety of books that were published. It is interesting to read that 146 book manuscripts were received, 23 of them were accepted for publication, and 18 of these have come off the press.

As a member of the National Lutheran Council, the U. L. C. A. is endeavoring to help displaced persons in Europe and to bring as many of them to America as possible. The financial burden which the U. L. C. A. assumes for 1949 in behalf of World Action is two million dollars. The goal adopted for all benevolent purposes for 1950 is ten million dollars. The Foreign Missions budget for 1949 calls for \$983,000.

We are happy to report that the U. L. C. A. took a conservative stand when the question of the "eucharistic prayer" was presented. Some of the members were in favor of introducing such a prayer into the liturgy, holding that the service would become more liturgical and more devotional by such an addition. The prayer contains, among other things, these sentences: "We make here before Thee the memorial . . . Accept this our sacrifice." The final vote on the matter was to the effect that the prayer might remain, but its present form should be revised.

There was a move to permit the use of the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament instead of the King James Version, but when this idea was voted on, it was defeated. We are surprised to note that the convention did not give full endorsement to parochial schools. We are told that of the 4,096 United Lutheran congregations only three now have parochial schools. Two are in the Los Angeles area, one in New York City. Pastor Edward Spierer said the day school his congregation in North Hollywood is conducting for the second year has 92 pupils enrolled, with five teachers. Tuition is ten dollars a month per pupil. The school is self-supporting. Pastor Henry Scherer of Los Angeles reported that enrollment in parochial schools is increasing seven times faster than in public schools in Los Angeles. Sunday schools are flourishing. The report says that fifty per cent of all United Lutherans, including persons of every age group, are enrolled in Sunday schools, which are being staffed by 72,000 teachers and officers. The question whether other titles than the ones now in use should be given to the officers of the U. L. C. A., whether, for instance, the president should be called "archbishop" and the presidents of the synods "bishops," will be studied by a special committee. In 1950 the U. L. C. A. convention is to be held in Des Moines, Iowa. A.

Theological Schools Have Record Enrollments.—Five Protestant theological schools and a Roman Catholic seminary in Boston have started their fall terms with record enrollments. Deans

of the six schools agreed that the unprecedented increase was due to a "spiritual renaissance" among World War II veterans and to the aggressive efforts being made by theological schools to provide clergymen to meet a nation-wide shortage in the Christian ministry. The Catholic Archdiocese of Boston, which has embarked on a program of "lend-lease" of priests in an effort to overcome shortages in other parts of the nation and in South America, finds that St. John's Seminary is so overcrowded that a new building is necessary. President Harold W. Tribble of the Andover-Newton Theological School, which prepares men for the Congregational and Baptist ministries, said his institution had more students than ever. "There has been an increased interest in the ministry by men who were touched by chaplains in the war," he said. The Very Rev. Charles Lincoln Taylor of the Cambridge Episcopal Theological School said that even with a record enrollment the clergy shortage could not be overcome for ten years. He said the Episcopal Church was short by 500 to 1,000 ministers. Enrollment at Gordon College of Theology is up, and the number of students at Boston University School of Theology has increased by 40 per cent. At Harvard Divinity School, a non-denominational institution, there are twice as many students as last year.

R. N. S.

The Religious Revolt: Protestant Version.—In *America*, October 2, 1948, Dr. Thomas P. Neill, associate professor of History at St. Louis University, takes issue with the writer of "The Protestant Revolution" in the June 14 issue of *Life* magazine. Those who think that the writer of the article in *Life* stated the facts of the case accurately and correctly will find to their amazement that from the Romanist viewpoint practically everything in *Life* has been misstated and misrepresented. He avers, for example, that "today no competent historian — be he Catholic, Protestant, or non-Christian — accepts as true the old controversialist version of the Protestant Revolt against the Catholic Church." "Popularizers of history continue to repeat, parrot-like, the phrases of this discredited account of how the religious revolt occurred." In particular, he denies that the *Life* article tells the truth when it describes the matter of "selling indulgences." "The simple assertion that indulgences were sold has been discredited as bad history." Again, there is the "worn-out charge that the Jesuits taught 'the end justifies the means.'" He writes: "The editors of *Life* follow the old pattern of controversial historical writing by quoting the Jesuit Busembaum to the effect that 'when the end is lawful, the means are also lawful.' But they neglect to tell their readers that this statement follows a discussion in which Father Busembaum has specifically outlawed wrongful means, that he is saying, in effect, that if the means are indifferent, then they are justified by a good end." He goes on to say: "So it is with any number of other outmoded charges, such as the statement that more than 10,000 Huguenots were killed in St. Bartholomew's Day massacre at the order of the French rulers. Historians today know that the king and his

mother ordered one man, or possibly three men, killed. It is also well known, on Huguenot authority, that about 2,000 — not 10,000 — were killed by the rioting Parisian populace, and that the Huguenots committed similar massacres whenever they had the strength of numbers to do so." He adds, moreover, the following: "Another typical misstatement in *Life* is the charge that 'the Church banned the reading of vernacular translations [of the Bible].' Historians are now aware that vernacular translations circulated quite freely before Luther's day, and that none of them was banned until after the Lollard heresy in England, when so many bad translations appeared — counterfeit coin again — that English bishops forbade the reading of English translations after Wyclif's time. There were, as a matter of fact, at least ninety-eight editions of the Vulgate by 1500, and there were numerous translations into German, Dutch, and French which the layman could read freely." Other denials on the part of Thomas Neill are the following: "The Protestant tradition that the Church was thoroughly corrupt in the sixteenth century." . . . "that the Protestant leaders left the Church because they wanted to worship God freely." . . . "that the Inquisition was more harsh than were the Calvinists in Geneva, or Zwinglians in Zurich, or Lutherans in Germany," etc. There is thus a great difference between the Protestant and the Romanist view of the Reformation, and the Lutheran historian is constantly forced to review in the light of modern historical research the great events that were ushered in by Luther's Gospel witness at Wittenberg in 1517. In the end, however, the historian will, no doubt, find that while there is a good deal in some books dealing with the history of the Reformation that cannot be held any longer, the Protestant presentation of the "Religious Revolt" is essentially correct and unanswerable.

J. T. M.

New Testament Manuscripts in the University of Chicago. — On Oct. 22 and 23 a unique conference was held at the University of Chicago. It was convened to honor Dr. E. J. Goodspeed, whose translation of the New Testament into our modern idiom appeared twenty-five years ago and at once became the best seller of the University of Chicago Press. Dr. Goodspeed himself was present and delivered an interesting address having the title "My Adventures with Manuscripts." The conference, holding four sessions, was devoted to the topic "The Textual Criticism of the New Testament." 150 New Testament scholars assembled to hear stimulating papers on this subject. The collection of New Testament manuscripts of which the University of Chicago is the possessor is said to be the largest of its kind in the United States. It includes 60 manuscripts in Greek, Armenian, Latin, and Syriac. Probably the most famous one of all the manuscripts is the thirteenth century codex which Dr. Goodspeed himself discovered in the store of an antiquarian in Paris and which at his request was purchased by the late Mrs. Edith Rockefeller McCormick, a daughter of John D. Rockefeller, the great financial pillar of the uni-

versity. Though she was the owner of the manuscript, she permitted the university to house and use it. Ultimately it was purchased by the university at a price that has not been made public. The whole collection of New Testament manuscripts of the university has been called, in honor of Dr. Goodspeed's remarkable services, the Edgar John Goodspeed collection. The chairman of the board of trustees, Mr. Harold Swift, made the formal announcement to this effect at the conference. A.

Suffering in Palestine. — We take over an item from the *Christian Century* of November 17 which will prove interesting to our readers. "Word came to headquarters of the Southern Baptists Foreign Missions Board October 22 that its property in Jerusalem had been hit by shells in the course of recent fighting. No casualties were reported, but George W. Sadler, of the Board, has announced that evacuation of missionaries from the area may be expected momentarily. Kate Ellen Gruver and her associate, Elizabeth Lee, on duty in Nazareth, are two of only ten American Protestant missionaries still remaining in Palestine. In a letter dated October 5 Miss Gruver wrote, 'We face a dreadful winter, with hundreds of villagers absolutely destitute. Whole villages have been leveled.' " This brings to mind reports that some damage has been done to the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, where the UN officials now have their headquarters. The Baptists are one of the few American denominations doing work in Palestine. In Nazareth, as one leaves the city going eastward, one passes a little brick building which has the inscription "Baptist Church." On account of war conditions it will be difficult to bring food and clothing to the destitute people in the various towns and villages. A.

Brief Items from Religious News Service

Lutherans in America

The Long Island Conference of the United Lutheran Synod of New York is conducting a six-week course on problems of management and labor at the central Y. M. C. A. in Brooklyn. The fifty-one laymen and women who have enrolled for the course are trying to prepare themselves for a more responsible Christian role in economic and industrial activity.

A new congregation was organized every two weeks during the past two years by the United Lutheran Church in America. A total of 56 new congregations were established in all parts of the country during this period, and the Board of American Missions stated that never before in its 30-year history have such gains been reported by the United Lutheran Church. These new churches added a total of 4,201 confirmed charter members or an average starting membership of 75 per church.

The Board of Foreign Missions of the United Lutheran Church in America reported at the 16th biennial convention in Philadelphia

that "doors may be closed to the gospel" because of "the spirit of extreme nationalism" prevalent in Southeast Asia, in the Middle East, and in the continent of Africa.

Lutherans Abroad

Dr. Anders Nygren, president of the Lutheran World Federation, has been appointed Bishop of Lund by the Swedish government in place of retired Bishop Edward Rodhe.

Prominent churchmen, including several American Protestants, took part in the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the first translation into Finnish of the New Testament at Abo cathedral. This translation was made by Mikael Agricola in the 16th century. Among the Americans present were Dr. Sylvester Michelfelder, chief European representative of the U.S.A. committee for the Lutheran World Federation; Dr. Alfred Haapanen of Hancock, Mich., President of the (Finnish) Suomi Synod; and the Rev. S.E. Engstrom, executive director of the Home Missions Board of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church.

A strict stand against the remarriage of divorced persons was taken by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland at its 16th Church Assembly in Turko. By a vote of 104 to 7, the delegates adopted a proposal presented by the so-called civil committee of the church, which provides that a divorced person, whose former spouse is still living, may not have the right to an ecclesiastical marriage. It also states that the civil marriage of such a person should not be blessed by the church.

By a vote of 87 to 24 the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland at its recent assembly gave the laity the permission to participate in the election of bishops.

Other Protestants in America

"God's Acres," a fundamentalist Protestant equivalent of Nebraska's famous Boy's Town, will be opened shortly about fifty miles northwest of Chicago. "God's Acres" will be established on a 650-acre farm and is planned to accommodate about 250 young men ranging from the ages of fourteen to twenty-one.

Dr. Elbert M. Conover of New York, director of the Inter-denominational Bureau of Architecture, predicted in Los Angeles that "there may be a great number of Protestant parochial schools in the near future, since religion cannot now be taught in public schools."

The Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention recently adopted a budget of \$2,958,667 for 1949. The budget provides that \$409,036 will be used in direct evangelistic activity in 25 geographical areas abroad, \$260,026 for schools, \$59,750 for medical work, \$101,511 for literature, and \$1,135,700 for personnel.

Other Protestants Abroad

The British and Foreign Bible Society added nine languages to its list of translations last year. The Society now publishes Scriptures in 778 languages and dialects.

The evangelical commission of the Czech Brethren Church is planning on enlisting laymen in special evangelistic crusades. Over 1,200 delegates who came from all parts of Bohemia and Moravia for a conference in Usti nad Orlici, Eastern Bohemia, discussed ways and means of bringing the Gospel to factory workers, students, soldiers, hospital patients, prison inmates, immigrants, and other groups "not adequately reached by the church."

Forty-three European theological students will study in the United States and Canada during the coming year on scholarships sponsored by the Department of Reconstruction and Inter-Church Aid of the World Council of Churches and affiliated groups. 35 will study in the United States, while Canada will be host to eight students.

A total of 1,578 European Mennonites have sailed from Bremerhaven, Germany, for Uruguay and Paraguay. The refugees include 700 Danzig Mennonites who will settle in Uruguay and 878 Russian Mennonites who will join the Paraguay settlement.

Delegates from all parts of Germany assembled in Frankfort for sessions of the German Methodist Conference. Foreign visitors included Bishop Arthur J. Moore of Atlanta, Ga., president of the Board of Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church in the United States. Discussions were expected to center mainly on plans for rebuilding Methodist churches destroyed during the war. The conference was also scheduled to consider enlarging the Methodist seminary at Frankfort. Plans call for increasing the enrollment of foreign students, thus giving the seminary a "more international character." [There are about 40,000 Methodists in Germany.]

Roman Catholics

The Albrecht-Durer Publishing Company in Vienna, Austria's largest Catholic publishing concern, is being re-established. The Nazis had confiscated the properties and had shut down the business.

In a message read to the delegates at the formal opening of the annual convention of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference in La Crosse, Wis., Pope Pius XII recommended that "special attention be paid to the problem of displaced persons, whose settlement in the United States opens up a new field for the apostolate of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference."

With the approval of Pope Pius XII the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office has placed all the works of Jean Paul Sartre,

noted French philosopher, on the Vatican Index of forbidden books. *Osservatore Romano*, the official Vatican newspaper, could advance no other reason for this action than the belief that the decree was inspired by M. Sartre's interpretations of the doctrine of existentialism.

Myron C. Taylor, President Truman's personal representative at the Vatican, donated a 15th century residence near Florence to Pope Pius XII last year. Dominican sisters of Sinsinawa, Wis., will conduct the Institute of Pope Pius XII in this residence as center of graduate study in the fine arts for properly qualified American women of all races and creeds.

More than 100 Roman Catholic priests are currently working in factories and workshops in various parts of France. These "Vatican Commandos"—as they have come to be known—went to the factories because the workers wouldn't come to the church in sufficient numbers.

Organized in response to Pope Pius XII's encyclical on Bible Studies (*Divino Afflante Spiritu*), the Italian Biblical Association has been formally constituted in Rome. The Association will be under the honorary leadership of Arnesto Cardinal Ruffini, archbishop of Palermo, with Msgr. Salvatore Garofalo in active charge. The Association will have three classes of membership. The first will consist of Bible teachers and other "competent Bible students," and the second of individuals dedicated to spreading the "Bible apostolate" among laymen. The third group will embrace "helpers"—persons who will promote the objectives of the Association through prayers and financial offerings. Headquarters of the new organization will be in the Pontifical Bible Institute in Rome, which is associated with the Pontifical Gregorian University.

The International Association of Former Catholic Priests, in co-operation with Italian Protestant leaders, recently opened the first International Congress for Religious Reform in Italy. The main topics of the congress were: 1. the present Italian religious situation; 2. the drafting of religious messages "to Italians and the world"; and 3. Church-state relations in Italy. The third topic involved the status of former Catholic priests under the Italy-Vatican concordat. Gabriel Marcel, French existentialist philosopher, and Dr. Emil Brunner, noted Swiss Protestant theologian, sent greetings to the congress.

Masses celebrated in Roman Catholic churches will be broadcast for the first time in Great Britain beginning on Christmas Day. The decision to give radio time for Masses was made after consultation with the leaders of all the Churches represented on the BBC's various advisory committees. These include the Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Congregational, Baptist, English Presbyterian, and the Church of Scotland.

The recent declaration by the Sacred Congregation of Rites in Rome has clarified a phrase in the Holy Week prayers of the Roman Catholic Church which previously appeared offensive to Jews. The phrase in question, "perfidi iudaei," occurs in prayers said in the Roman Church on Good Friday for the Jewish people. The Sacred Congregation, in response to a question on the point, has authorized "translation into the vernacular in the sense of 'infidelitas'" — meaning "wanting in (Christian) belief." An article written two years ago by the Rev. John M. Oesterreicher, and published in *Theological Studies*, declared that innumerable Catholic authorities in ancient, medieval, and modern times had shown that the Latin word "perfidi" did not when used in the liturgy, mean "perfidious." The priest said, "lack of faith," meaning, of course, lack of Christian faith, was actually the correct translation.

Other Matters

American and British missionaries in communist-held Tsinan are "safe and well," according to a report received at Presbyterian headquarters in Shanghai. The report indicates that "the communists are continuing their new policy of protecting missionaries, especially medical workers."

In the two recent World Wars 134 Protestant chaplains died. A plaque memorializing their services was unveiled in Washington November 3.

Denominational schools in the western sector of Berlin were again ordered to cease their activities by education commissioner Wildangel, a communist. Church officials indicated, however, they would disregard the order since the western powers recently approved continuation of the schools.

A new series of religious programs which began on October 31 is being televised each Sunday afternoon by the Columbia Broadcasting System. The series, entitled "Lantern to My Feet," will feature the activities of the three major faiths, with emphasis on how each of the religions is seen through the eyes of its children. The first broadcast showed a 20-minute documentary film, "This Road We Walk," which dramatized the relief needs of Europe and Asia. The film was produced by Church World Service, inter-denominational relief agency.

The United Church of Christ in Japan at its recent third general assembly made the Apostles' Creed its official creed.

Book Review

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis 18, Mo.

D. Chr. Ernst Luthardt's Kompendium der Dogmatik. Von D. Dr. Robert Jelke, Professor der Theologie in Heidelberg. 15. Auflage. Jedermann-Verlag, Heidelberg. 1948. XIV und 479 Seiten, 7×9.

When K. Stroebel reviewed the first edition of *Luthardt's Kompendium* (*Zeitschrift fuer gesammte Lutherische Theologie und Kirche*, 1867, pp. 191—201), he hoped that as Hase's *Huterus redivivus* had gone through many editions, so also *Luthardt's Kompendium* would see at least ten editions. His hope has been fulfilled. For almost a century this compend of Lutheran dogmatics has been used as a textbook. Since 1932 Dr. Robert Jelke, for almost thirty years professor of theology at Heidelberg, has prepared three new editions of *Luthardt's Kompendium*. While the editor has preserved the general arrangement and in some instances even the phraseology of the first edition, the Jelke editions quite naturally reflect the author-editor's theological orientation. This is a modified Erlanger Theology as it was developed by Bishop Ludwig Ihmels. At the same time the influence of Max Reischle and Martin Kaehler are also traceable. The former, a disciple of Ritschl, stressed a formal-philosophical approach, the latter the historically established fact and eternally relevant significance of Christianity. The value of this compend lies in its systematic arrangement and in its objective presentation. Luthardt and Jelke lay great emphasis on the history of doctrine. In its style and arrangement this compend might almost be considered the very antithesis of Pieper's *Christliche Dogmatik*. Luthardt's compend is more encyclopedic, dogmatico-historical, and can therefore be really expanded, revised, and brought up to date. Pieper, however, wrote in such a personal, almost heart-to-heart manner, and directed himself so specifically to the antitheses of his day, that it is extremely difficult to submit Pieper to a revision or a translation. Luthardt-Jelke is an excellent reference work; Pieper remains even in his written *Dogmatik* the vibrant teacher of God's Word. — The publishers, aided by a donation of paper from the Presbyterian Church, have succeeded in publishing a book which excels mechanically anything we have seen on the German book market.

F. E. MAYER

Die Theologie der lutherischen Bekenntnisschriften. By Edmund Schlink. 2. Auflage. Chr. Kaiser-Verlag, Muenchen. 1946. 434 Seiten, 6×9. DM. 10.80 (postage additional; total about \$4.00).

The author, born in 1903, studied natural sciences, psychology, psychiatry, and philosophy from 1922—27, and then theology 1927—30. For a brief period he taught at Bethel, Bielefeld, until the Nazis closed the school. Since 1946 he has been professor of systematic theology at Heidelberg. He was active in the *Bekennende Kirche* and understood the Barmen Theses to require the pastors to consider their Confessional standards seriously. As a result he

wrote a number of tracts which set forth the true spirit of the Lutheran Confessions. In 1940 he published the results of his lectures on the Confessions, *Die Theologie der lutherischen Bekenntnisschriften*, a reprint of which has appeared in an edition of 5,000 during the past summer. There is no other work on the market comparable to Schlink's study, which takes all Lutheran Confessions, including the Formula of Concord, into consideration. We have many introductions to the Confessions, Plitt's introduction to the Augustana, Frank's theological analysis of the Formula of Concord, Krauth's evaluation of the underlying principle of the Confessional Writings in the *Conservative Reformation*, Little's popular treatise, *The Confessional Principle*. Schlink's book really is what the title announces it to be. It serves as a prolegomena to Dogmatics and is so used in Heidelberg. In eight chapters the author presents the chief loci of Christian dogmatics according to all the Confessional Writings of the Lutheran Church. Footnotes will acquaint the German student with all the relevant literature. Present economic conditions are such that our American readers will probably have to postpone ordering this book until a later date. It would be highly desirable to make this book available to our American theologians. In several instances, particularly concerning the Church, the Church and State, the reviewer could not agree with the author's interpretation of the Confessions; in other instances the American theologian employs different phraseology and may also move in other thought patterns. Particularly significant is the section on Law and Gospel and the chapter suggesting topics for study.

F. E. MAYER

Studies in the Gospel According to St. Matthew. By J. M. Weiden-schilling, M. A., S. T. D. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis 18, Mo. 163 pages, 5×7½. Textbook, 65 cents. The **Teacher's Guide** of the same work (same size, 189 pages). \$1.00.

These are excellent books which receive our cordial endorsement. They naturally follow the chapter arrangement of the Gospel. Every chapter is subdivided into paragraphs with special headings. The Bible text is not reprinted. The material submitted gives explanations that are pertinent and helpful. The first one of these books (*Pupil's Guide*) has a paragraph appended to every lesson with the heading "For study and discussion." In the paragraph one finds questions or directions for study. The *Teachers' Guide* furnishes material with which the ordinary Bible reader, as a rule, is not acquainted.

W. ARNDT

This Blest Communion! A Series of Communion Sermons Based on the Common Service of Christendom. By Paul H. Burgdorf. Published by Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wis. 208 pages, 5¼×8. \$2.00.

It was a very happy thought put into execution when Pastor Burgdorf preached a series of fifteen Communion sermons to his congregation, choosing Scripture texts as these were suggested by our common Communion Service printed in our Hymnal. Pastor Burgdorf says, "Almost every part of the Common Service is taken, word for word, from the Holy Scriptures. But since this is true, hence our order of worship is made up for the most part of selections

from the inspired Word of God, and since it is meant to be an embodiment and expression of our faith, ought we not be more or less familiar with its meaning? Just what, in general, is its significance? And what does each one of its several parts mean to you in particular? It shall be my purpose, through a proper understanding of these things, to try to help make your Communion Service mean more to you than might otherwise be the case." (P. 3f.) Though our Christians are intelligent and sincere, yet it is to be feared that frequently they repeat words which they have learned and been accustomed to recite without being fully conscious of the meaning of these words for their spiritual life. It is somewhat an overstatement when the author says that if all people in this world would become Christians, then the world would again be a paradise. It was likely not intentional when the author quoted the words in Jer. 31:33: "I will put my law in their inward parts," as referring to the Mosaic law. According to the context, it refers to the Gospel promises. But such few inaccuracies do not mar the usefulness of the book. We heartily recommend it to our pastors. It may persuade them to explain the liturgy to their communicants in a similar way. Let us not take too much for granted as far as our church members are concerned, for then we deprive them of some of the blessings which they might otherwise enjoy.

J. H. C. FRITZ

The Martin Luther Christmas Book, with celebrated woodcuts by his contemporaries. Translated and arranged by Roland H. Bainton. Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia. 76 pages. \$2.50. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis 18, Mo.

In this interesting volume, one of America's greatest Luther scholars, in excellent English dress, lets Martin Luther tell the story of Christmas according to the Gospels, from the Annunciation through to the Presentation. This is no mere effort, on part of the translator, to let the present generation know what Luther said and wrote about Christmas. The purpose of the volume evidently is this: To show that what the Great Reformer said four hundred years ago is as applicable to our generation as it was to his own. The translator states in a very searching introductory chapter: "The question was not whether God could or would make a special star, but why the Lord of the universe should care enough about us mortals to take our flesh and share our woes. The condescension of God was the great wonder. This it is that reason cannot fathom. . . . The manger and the cross are never far apart for Luther. . . . Bethlehem presaged Calvary. Confronted by the self-emptying of God, modern man stands on no other ground than that of Luther. For neither can faith be easy. For neither need it be impossible. That Luther, feeling as acutely as we all the difficulties, could yet believe—this may help our unbelief."

The book is illustrated with woodcuts by Duerer, Schongauer, and Altdorfer.

The translator also offers a translation of his own of Luther's greatest Christmas carol, "Vom Himmel hoch," which in this new English dress, we believe, retains the simple, childlike flavor of the original German in a most remarkable way. Here is Dr. Bain-

ton's version of one of the most-quoted stanzas: "O dear Lord Jesus, for your head Now I will make the softest bed. The chamber where this bed shall be Is in my heart, inside of me."

W. G. POLACK

Calvinism An Interpretation of Its Basic Ideals. Vol. I. By H. Henry Meeter. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 233 pages, 6×9. \$3.50.

This is the second edition of Dr. Meeter's *Calvinism*, which first appeared in 1939. Dr. Meeter here offers to the reader a helpful guide to a systematic study of Calvinism. L. Berkhof, in a brief foreword to this second edition, draws attention to a renewed interest in the teachings of Calvin. This interest seems to be attested by the fact that arrangements have already been made to have this work translated into the Dutch language, and a request has come from Tokyo for permission to translate it into the Japanese language. The rapid changes on the political scene during the past decade have made the author's references to some of the political institutions of recent years quite obsolete. This, however, does not detract from the general merits of this useful manual on Calvinism. For a comprehensive review of this work see *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, Vol. XII, No. 8 (Aug., 1941), pp. 639—640.

L. W. SPITZ

Our Redeemer — A Cathedral of Gospel Art. \$2.00 for the cloth cover; \$1.00 for the soft cover.

This is a 96-page description, both narrative and pictorial (138 illustration), of the art and architecture that went into the construction of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Chicago. Of singular interest are the excellent reproductions of the 43 wood carvings depicting the Sermon on the Mount. Church building committees in search of meaningful and distinctive ecclesiastical symbols may wish to order a copy. Write to Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 6430 S. Harvard Ave., Chicago 21.

PAUL BRETSCHER

The Sunday School in Action. By Clarence H. Benson. Moody Press, Chicago. 1947. 5×7¾, 327 pages. \$2.00.

This is the eighth printing of a very popular book which originally appeared in 1932 and was revised in 1941. Written from a conservative viewpoint, it is a book which pastors and Sunday school superintendents will want to read and study if they hope to make their Sunday schools more than the usual appendages to a program of Christian education. Dr. Benson has made the Sunday school a special study, and his experiences are reflected in the practical principles on administration set forth. The author's contention is that the average Sunday school is not *in action* and suffers from *inaction*; hence the title. Even the casual observer will have to agree with him, for the Church has not pushed the peculiar advantages of the Sunday school to their limits.

We regret that the opportunity was not used to revise the book at this time. The statistics and illustrations date back to 1932, having even escaped the revision of 1941. Here and there the author has permitted his enthusiasm to run away with him, when he says, for instance: "Multiplying and magnifying the Sunday school is

unquestionably the solution of juvenile delinquency" (p. 43). The publishers and the dates of the books listed in the bibliography would have been of considerable help. None of the recent books have been included, and the entire trend in the use of visual aids has been omitted.

ARTHUR C. REPP

The King's Business. A study book for councilmen by Wm. H. and Robert W. Stackel. The United Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia, Pa. 64 pages, 4¾×7. 30 cents.

A fine little manual on the basis of which, with proper adaptations to our own congregational and synodical organization, a pastor can conduct a profitable training course for his church officers. The emphasis is placed on stewardship and finance.

O. E. SOHN

Lands of the Cross and Crescent. By Cyrus H. Gordon. Ventnor Publishers, Inc., Ventnor, N. J. 267 pages, 5½×8½. \$3.75.

Doctor Gordon, who has devoted his life to the study of the East, has lived in, and studied the language of, every country described in his book. He served in the Army throughout the war, and his assignments included the lands of the Middle East. He taught colloquial Arabic and Persian for the Army.

The book is essentially a background study of the Islamic countries in Part I and Christian countries in Part II. Thus in Part I we find descriptions of the geography, races, religions, customs, and history of Arabs and Muslims, Saudi Arabia, North Africa, Egypt, Transjordan, Palestine, Syria and Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey, and Iran; and, in Part II, Europe and Christendom, Italy, Vatican City, Germany, France, the British Isles, Sweden, and the United States of America. There is nothing dry about Gordon's style. For those desiring a fine background understanding of the countries of the Arab world this is a valuable book. For students wishing to study Islam or the history of missions in Moslem lands, this book is what is needed for the background study of these various lands.

A second edition should include a simple outline map of each country described in Part I.

E. C. ZIMMERMANN

Christ—The Hope of Glory. By Wm. Childs Robinson. Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., 1947. 324 pages, 5½×8. \$3.00.

This is, as the subtitle indicates, a Christological eschatology. The Union Theological Seminary of Virginia, sponsoring the Sprunt lectureship, chose Dr. William Childs Robinson, professor of historical theology at Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Ga., to deliver the lectures which are here presented to the reader.

Dr. Robinson shows that he is familiar with the salient literature bearing on his subject. He quotes freely and refers to the writings of other men. His chief interest, however, is to direct his readers to the Bible as the only true source of knowledge regarding Christ—the Hope of Glory. He says: "What we do seek is that Christian thinking find its canon in the Christian revelation." He never leaves his readers in doubt concerning his point of view, declaring: "We start neither with an axiom of

reason nor with a datum of experience, but with what God has told us in His Word concerning Himself, His gracious intervention for our salvation, and the hope He has laid up for those who trust in Him." In pointing out that the entire structure of the Old Testament and the New involves the eschatological expectation, he directs attention to the perfect unity of the entire Bible as the Word of God. He finds Christ as the Savior from Genesis to Revelation and in the Old Testament as well as in the New the ultimate purpose of His redeeming work.

Dr. Robinson is prepared to find that some Christian brethren will differ with details of his eschatology. He presents some views with which men have differed. Some, for instance, will differ with him regarding his views on the conversion of Israel and the Antichrist. Dr. Robinson speaks of the Sacraments as seals; his Lutheran readers would prefer the term "means of grace."

In spite of any differences, however, the Christian reader will be edified by this volume. He cannot read it without a sense of the imminency of the coming of the Lord and his own vital place in the completed plan of redemption. It will make him rejoice in Christ his Savior and cause him to look forward to the blessed return of his risen and ascended Lord upon the throne of His glory.

L. W. SPITZ

Mahatma Gandhi. An Interpretation. By E. Stanley Jones. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York and Nashville, 1948. 160 pages, 8×5¼. \$2.00.

The publishers requested the author to write this book, since he is the Western Christian who has best known and most appreciated Gandhi through the years. Anyone who may have expected E. Stanley Jones to produce a syncretistic or overenthusiastic report of Gandhi's Christianity will be disappointed in this book. It is remarkably sober and factual in its appraisal of Gandhi's relation to Christianity. It is, however, enthusiastic in its regard for the significance of Gandhi to India. The thesis of the book is that Gandhi's mode of life, and his death, are devices of action and modes of redemption which are Christian in their method and therefore, regrettably for Christians, a witness which they left undone. While the full significance of Gandhi remains to be discerned, this book, early as it is, should nevertheless rank among the primary documents.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.:

Portals of Prayer No. 87. — "Mine Eyes Have Seen." Daily Devotions from Nov. 26 to Dec. 31, 1948. By Rev. H. W. Gockel. 10 cents each, postpaid.

Andachtsbuechlein No. 87. **Die Grosstaten Gottes.** German Daily Devotions from Nov. 25 to Dec. 31, 1948. By Rev. Herman Harms. 10 cents each, postpaid.

Am Krankenbette. By Rev. H. M. Zorn. 15 leaflets. 15 cents.

Ninety-Nine Questions and Answers on Christian Doctrine. By Rev. Wm. H. Eifert. 24 pages. 10 cents.

Children's Christmas Services. **Sing We All Noel.** By A. H. Stelhorn. **Christmas Joy.** By Wm. A. Kramer. Single copy, 7 cents.

The Babe of Bethlehem. By Arthur W. Gross. 14 pages. Single copy, 25 cents, postpaid; 12 copies 20 cents each, plus postage.

From Doubleday & Company, Inc., New York 20, N. Y.:

A Treasury of Biblical Quotations. Edited by Lester V. Berrey. $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$, 240 pages. \$2.45.

From Hinrichsen Edition Limited, London, W. C. 1, England:

Thirteen Centuries of English Church Music. By W. H. Parry. 1946. 64 pages, $5 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. \$1.50. A handy and informative little compendium, prepared by a man who is a well-known music historian of England.

WALTER E. BUSZIN

From J. B. Lippincott Co., New York:

The Story of Jesus. Arranged and edited from the King James Version by Bradford Smith. $6\frac{1}{2} \times 4$, 223 pages. \$1.95.

From Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, Ohio:

The Lord Thy Healer. A book of devotions for the use of pastors when visiting the sick. By J. Sheatsley, D. D. Second edition. $6 \times 4\frac{1}{4}$, 280 pages. \$2.00.

From Charles Scribner's Sons, New York:

Of Flight and Life. By Charles A. Lindbergh. $7\frac{1}{4} \times 5$, 56 pages. \$1.50.

From Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

God Bless America and Other Sermons. By Wm. Herschel Ford, D. D. $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$, 144 pages. \$1.00.

